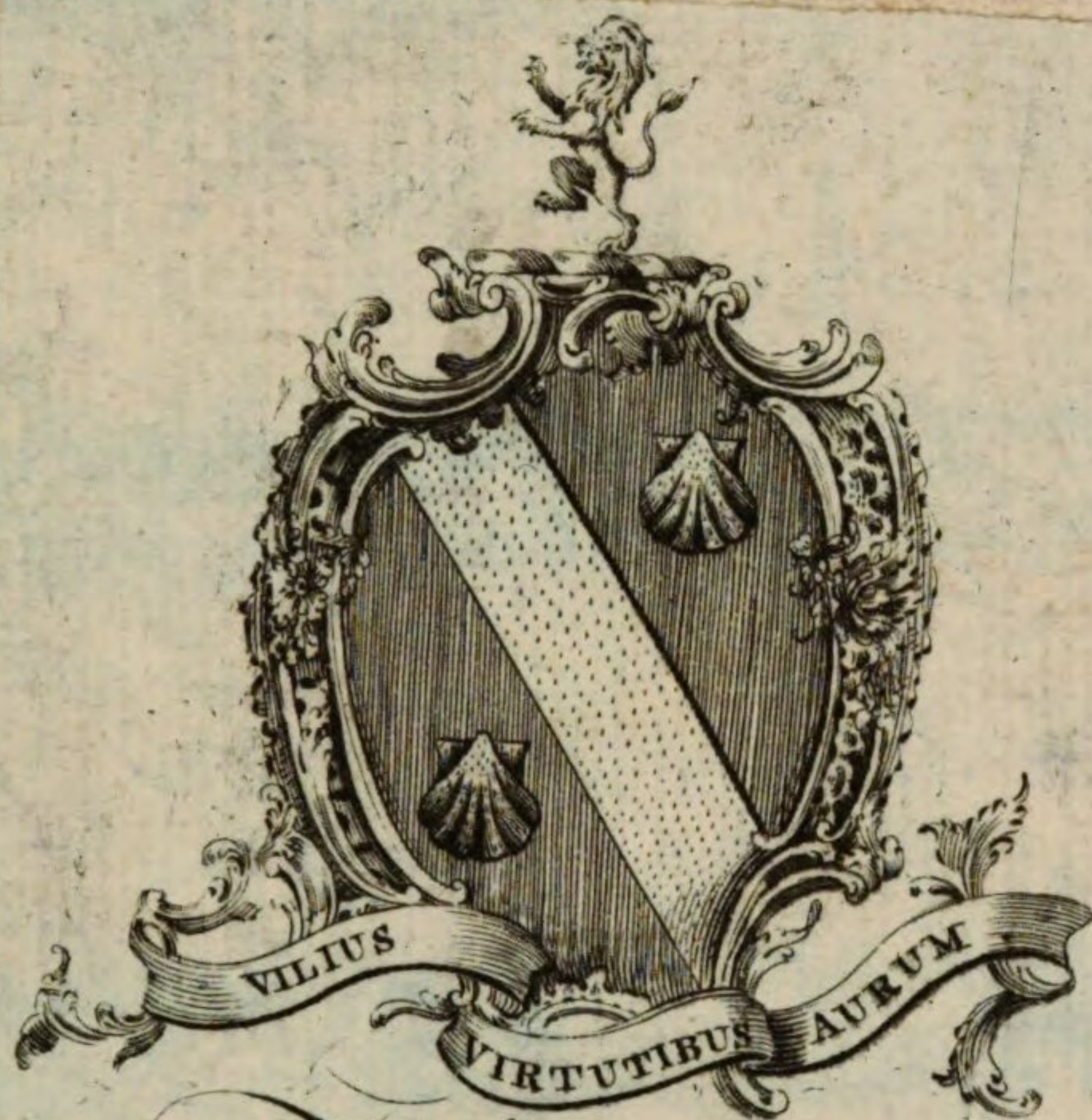


Brit. 454 -9

Register



Sam^t Petrie.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

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OF GREAT BRITAIN

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T H E
Parliamentary Register;
O R,
H I S T O R Y
O F T H E
PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES
O F T H E
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CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF

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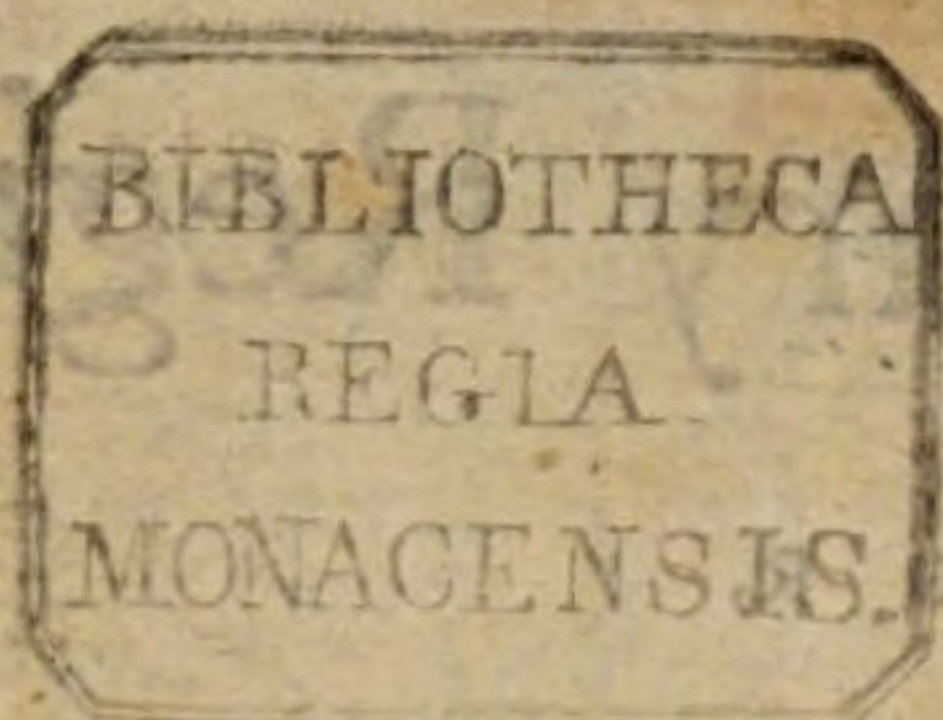
FOURTH SESSION of the FOURTEENTH PARLIAMENT
O F
G R E A T B R I T A I N.

V O L. IX.

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. ALMON, opposite BURLINGTON-HOUSE,
in PICCADILLY.

MDCCLXXVII.



HISTORICAL

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES

OF THE

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T H E
H I S T O R Y
O F T H E
P R O C E E D I N G S and D E B A T E S
O f t h e F O U R T H S E S S I O N o f t h e
H O U S E o f C O M M O N S
O F T H E

Fourteenth Parliament of *Great-Britain*.

NO debates. *March 3, 4, and 5.*

March 6.

The day for opening the budget.

Lord *North* began with explaining the terms of the loan. Lord *North*. He enumerated the several sums that had already been voted this session by Parliament, to which he added those that would probably be still voted to complete the supplies of the current year. The monies already voted have been mentioned on the several days; we shall therefore mention only some of the most material articles that have not yet appeared, viz.

For maintenance of convicts employed	l.	s.	d.
on the Thames,	7846	0	0
Paid in pensions to persons compelled to			
leave America,	57856	0	0
Deficiency on malt duty,	158000	0	0
Ditto of grants for 1777,	38489	0	0
Interest on exchequer bills,	48440	0	0

There were other articles of less moment, which it is needless to enumerate; but the sum total amounted to

£. 13230318 2 10

Towards defraying this expence, he reckons the land and malt tax, 1,500,000*l.* exchequer bills as usual;

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B

and

and taking the sinking-fund * by anticipation upon a 5th quarter, at 3,000,000*l.* with some inferior articles, amounting in the whole to

7294786 0 6½

Balance, 5935562 2 3¼
So

* The sinking-fund, from the 5th of April, 1776, to the 5th of April, 1777, produced as follows: *l.*

First half-year, from April 5, 1776, to October 10, 1776, 1907428

Second half-year, from October 10, 1776, to April 5, 1777, 985512

Year's produce, from 5th April, 1776, to 5th April, 1777, 2892940

The sinking-fund produced from the 5th of April, 1777, to the 5th of April, 1778.

First half-year, from April 5, 1777, to October 10, 1777, 1700811

Second half-year, from October 10, 1777, to April 5, 1778, 944115

Year's produce, from 5th April, 1777, to 5th April, 1778, 2644926

Produce of the year, from April 5, 1776, to April 5, 1777, 2892940

Produce of the year, from April 5, 1777, to April 5, 1778, 2644926

The produce of the year ending April 5, 1777, exceeds the produce of the year ending April 5, 1778, 248014

But it must be observed, that in the year ending 5th April, 1778, there was paid 100,000*l.* more to the civil list, than in the year ending 5th April, 1777; and, moreover, that half a year of the interest of the money borrowed on the tax on servants, was paid in the year ending 5th April, 1778, though no part of that tax was yet levied; these together make an additional produce in favour of the year ending 5th of April, 1778, of 150000

The nett balance of produce in favour of the year ending 5th of April, 1777, is therefore only 98014

Though the above figures (it is believed) are accurate, or to a trifle so; yet it is very certain, from authentic and incontrovertible documents, that the nett receipt of the customs for the year 1776, decreased from the nett receipt for the year 1775, in the amazing sum of 1,075,960*l.* No excess in the excise, through the profusions of the war, or in any other branches of the revenue, could compensate, or nearly compensate, this diminution. It is therefore to be presumed, that this period is not even yet brought forward into the public accounts; and that the produce is lying somewhere, unaccounted for by the collectors or receivers.

A. 1778.

D E B A T E S.

3

So that he proposed to borrow six millions upon the following terms: Each subscriber of 100*l.* to be entitled to an annuity of 3*l.* per cent. which he valued at

66 10 0

A farther annuity of 2*l.* 10*s.* for 30 years; which, at 14 years purchase, was equal to

35 0 0

And a proportionable share of 48,000 lottery tickets; that is, eight tickets for every 1000*l.* subscribed; the probable profit on which would be 3*l.* each; which for every 100*l.* was

2 8 0

Total, 103 18 0

He observed, that much art had been used, both at home and abroad, by the enemies of this country (declaring at the same time that he had no particular persons in view) to depress the credit of the nation, and even to prevent the loan from being obtained altogether; for this reason, he wished the advantage to the subscribers might be considerable; for that it was better to grant ample terms, than to risk a bargain that might ultimately tend to our discredit. He therefore thought it both just and wise to give the subscribers such a bargain as might turn out a profitable one. That he had held out no false colours to the lenders, nor let one syllable escape him, in regard to the probability of a war with France, the apprehension of which had lately so deeply affected the public funds, that they might not have it in their power to reproach him with events that might happen; that they therefore knowingly run the risk of that contingency; that he rather chose to borrow upon worse terms, than to hold forth flattering hopes of any kind whatever; that several reasons might be assigned for the present scarcity of money, besides the rumour of an approaching war; such

By indulgences of this kind, shewn to those intrusted with public money, these offices, with apparently trifling salaries, become the most beneficial the Treasury have to bestow; and obscure people, much to the disgrace of the finance-administration, and to the prejudice of the public (who are always in advance, and pay dearly for every shilling they are in advance) acquire, soon, and undeservedly, princely fortunes in them, free even from the envy, and the anxious uncertainties that ever attend on the offices of the more conspicuous ministers of state.

as the extravagant speculations many of our merchants had lately run into with regard to the ceded islands, and the prevailing fashion of enjoying their fortunes immediately, or rather by anticipation: that besides, giving good terms now, secured our credit in future; that the stocks, he apprehended, would not be lower, were a war actually declared; and that the money was actually subscribed by substantial men, who were themselves able to advance it.

With regard to the annuity part of the loan, he observed, that it was better, and more advantageous to the public, to grant it for 30 years than for a longer term; as the long annuities, of which there were above 82 years to run, sold now at 20 years purchase. And as it might better suit some persons to have their annuities converted into a life annuity, and which would be of no prejudice to the public, he meant to put it in their option, before the 22d of December, to do so.

Among many other particulars, he took notice of the experiment he had made of criminal labour upon the Thames, which had answered beyond all expectation; and hinted at a farther extension of the plan over the whole kingdom; and that, to ease the counties, it might be advisable to bring to a sale such of the royal forests as were now of little or no use, either for the growth of timber, or for royal grandeur.

In the course of his Lordship's speech, which lasted near two hours, he took occasion to observe upon the extensive resources of this country, notwithstanding the despondency of some individuals; in particular, several accessions the sinking fund would receive within a few years, such as 140,000*l.* of exchequer annuities, between the years 1792 and 1798; and therefore, that in general it was better to borrow on higher terms, in a way that should in a course of years be adding to that fund.

His Lordship gave what he said was a very pleasing picture of the strength, wealth, and stability of this country.

His Lordship did not enter upon the subject of the new taxes; but said he should explain them on Monday next, the 9th.

March 9.

Lord North.

Lord *North*, in the committee of supply, opened his speech by acquainting the House, that the interest to be provided for was 330,000*l.*; that to pay this it was necessary to provide a productive tax; that it was difficult to fix on any that would not be, in some degree, unequal; that he wished to avoid burthening the lower ranks of people; that it was not easy to come at the real property of individuals; but that

A. 1778.

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that one ground of judging of this, which prevailed in all nations, was by the expence at which they lived; and this, though it might not answer in every single instance, was yet a very good general rule; that laying the tax upon the consumption of commodities was both equal and palatable, as the resentment of the person taxed fell on the dealer, and not on the officer of the revenue; that the taxes on coaches, on servants, and on houses, were proper and eligible, as they were visible signs of ability to pay them; that a tax on bricks and tiles had formerly been thought of and rejected; as likewise taxing houses by the extent of their fronts, or by the number of their chimnies, which was the same as hearth-money, neither of which afforded a just estimate of the value of the house. He proposed therefore to exempt all houses under the rent of 5*l.* *per annum* from all taxation; that all houses from 5*l.* to 50*l.* should be rated at 6*d.* in the pound, and from 50*l.* and upwards at 1*s.* to be paid by the occupier; that this tax might be levied by those who collected the window-tax, with a little additional assistance for a year or two, till the rates were fully adjusted. He then proceeded, by the assistance of the window-tax, to form a computation what the present tax would raise; which he reckoned as follows:

In England and Wales,	—	259000
In Scotland,	—	5000
		—
In all		264000

He then proposed an additional tax on all wines imported, viz. eight guineas per tun, or 2*d.* a bottle, on all French wines, and four guineas per tun, or 1*d.* a bottle on all other wine, which his Lordship computed would amount to 72,558*l.* in the whole 336,558*l.* viz. 6,558*l.* above the sum wanted.

The following is his Lordship's calculation of the produce of the above taxes.

House Tax.

24,000 houses in London, Westminster, and Middlesex, between 50 <i>l.</i> and 5 <i>l.</i> a year,	£.	14750
30,900 ditto, above 50 <i>l.</i> <i>per ann.</i>		193500
190,000 houses in England and Wales, comprized at 15 <i>l.</i> on an average,	—	71250
17,000 houses in Scotland,	—	5000

Carried over, *284000

* His Lordship said he should only state this at 284,000*l.*

Brought over,	£. 248000
Additional Wine Tax.	
On claret and port, —	72588
	356088
Required by ways and means, —	350000
Surplus,	6088

His Lordship concluded with observing, that it was no very agreeable employment to propose taxes of any kind; that it was a measure necessary in point of honour, not a point of pleasure; but that he thought it more honourable not to decline any duty of his office whilst he held it, however disagreeable.

Some debate ensued. The gentlemen in opposition saw it in a very contrary light, and considered it as highly oppressive and disproportionate. It was not, they said, from the rent of an house altogether, that we can judge of the circumstances of the tenant; since we see that tradesmen of every denomination are obliged, through necessity, to possess houses commodiously situated, however highly rented, and to whom an additional out-going of a shilling in the pound will be of material injury. In several parishes of London and Westminster, the houses are burthened by the land-tax, poor-rates, window-tax, pavement, lights, watch, &c. &c. to the amount of eight shillings in the pound, and upwards; and it so happens, that the parties most heavily burthened are the least able to bear it.

The wine tax was opposed only with regard to the Oporto, as it affected the commercial alliance subsisting between Portugal and us, and might produce a tax there on the importation of British manufactures. About half after seven, however, the motion for leave to bring in the bills passed without a division. This being disposed of,

Mr. Gilbert. Mr. Gilbert then made his promised motion, which was, “That the better to enable his Majesty to vindicate the honour and dignity of his crown, and the dominions thereunto belonging, in the present exigency of affairs, there be granted to his Majesty one fourth part of the nett annual income upon the salaries, fees, and perquisites of all offices under the crown (except those held by the Speaker of the House of Commons, the Chancellor or Commissioners of the Great Seal,

Seal, the Judges, Ministers to foreign parts, Commissioners, Officers in the army and navy, and all others that do not produce a clear income of 200*l. per annum* to the person or persons enjoying the same) and also of all annuities, pensions, stipends, or other yearly pensions issuing out of the Exchequer, or any branch of his Majesty's revenues, after deducting all fees and taxes thereon by authority of Parliament; to commence from 25th March, 1778, and to continue for one year, *and during the continuance of the American war.*" *

The committee divided upon this motion, when 100 were for it, and 82 against it.

March 10.

The resolutions of yesterday were reported, and all agreed to, except Mr. Gilbert's motion, upon which the House divided, 141 for it, and 147 against it.

March 11.

Mr. *Sawbridge* made his annual motion for shortening the duration of Parliaments. The question was called for, and the House divided; for the question 33, against it 83. *Mr. Sawbridge.*

The House resolved itself into a committee on the state of the nation.

The subject this day was the state of the navy.

The following is the substance of the most material papers which were referred to the consideration of the committee.

State and condition of his Majesty's ships and vessels of war in Great Britain and Ireland, and on channel service, November 27th, 1777, according to the several weekly accounts delivered in to the House of Commons by the Admiralty-office; being 205 sail, whose proper war-complement amounts to 34,996 seamen and marines.

Ships' names.	Complement.	Seamen mustered.	Marines must.
Sandwich,	750	635	60
Princess Royal,	750	428	44
Monarch,	650	461	48
Prince George,	750	518	48
Princess Amelia,	700	279	43
Valiant,	700	509	44
Mars,	600	515	48

* These last words in Italics were added by way of amendment.

Ardent,

Ships' names.	Complement.	Seamen mustered.	Marines must.
Ardent,	500	433	43
Hector,	650	476	47
Boston,	220	193	35
Courageux,	650	461	48
Centaur,	650	475	47
Grafton,	650	138	17
Trident,	500	288	44
Europe,	500	158	47
Terrible,	650	403	46
Worcester,	500	310	48
Active,	220	189	40
Camel,	200	110	23
Panther,	420	198	18
Druid,	120	77	12
Russel,	650	156	16
Sultan,	650	186	24
Squirrel,	160	117	0
Hazard,	120	71	0
Ostrich,	120	71	0
Leviathan,	120	100	15
Conquestador,	400	278	48
Sterling Castle,	500	413	25
Prince of Wales,	650	546	106
Albion,	650	516	76
Bedford,	650	552	127
Bienfaisant,	500	415	34
Asia,	500	465	85
Conqueror,	650	495	42
Shrewsbury,	650	48	0
Fame,	650	222	16
Ocean,	750	553	49
Blenheim,	750	325	39
Boyne,	600	444	45
Foudroyant,	700	559	45
Belleisle,	500	435	43
Burford,	500	423	43
Queen,	750	438	43
Thetis,	220	194	36
Boreas,	200	156	0
Weazle,	150	120	23
Wolf,	80	59	9
Sherborne,	60	30	0
Ferret,	80	28	0

Grey-hound

Ships' names.	Complement.	Seamen mustered.	Marines must.
Greyhound cutter,	60	28	0
Hawke sloop,	100	94	14
Lurcher cutter,	50	28	0
Folkstone cutter,	50	29	0
Alert sloop,	100	65	0
Esther cutter,	50	25	0
Wells cutter,	50	24	0
Andromeda,	200	0	0
Dorset yacht,	50	about 30	0
Alarm } cutters,	30 }	No returns.	
Meredith }	30 }		
Cornwall,	650	540	42
Ranger,	80	54	0
Sprightly,	80	49	0
Speedwell sloop,	80	57	0
Arethusa,	220	197	34
Alderney sloop,	100	97	0
Wasp sloop,	80	64	0
Cupid sloop,	110	104	0
Harpy sloop,	120	119	0
Rattlesnake cutter,	80	65	0
Ruby,	500	69	0
Pelican,	160	143	34
Minerva,	220	178	40
Invincible,	650	460	40
Exeter,	500	437	43
Egmont,	650	475	47
Huffar,	200	185	38
Torbay,	650	449	100
Ramillies,	650	471	49
* Resolution,	650	445	28
* Culloden,	650	493	31
* Royal Oak,	650	498	46
Proserpine,	200	192	38
Drake,	100	91	0
Orford, hospital-ship,	80	52	14
Nabob,	160	32	0
Greenwich,	160	20	0

* These three ships (after the returns) were completed to 550 men each; as per letter 8th November, 1777, from the commander in chief at Portsmouth.

Ships names.		Complement.	Seamen mustered.	Marines must.
Pacific,		160	30	0
Lioness,		160	27	0
Supply,		160	8	0
Dromedary,		160	2	0
Hired armed ships.	{ Countess of Scarborough, Heart of Oak, Three Sisters, Lieth, Content, Merchant, Three Brothers, Satisfaction,	}	These lately commis- sioned; their com- plement will be 120 men each.	
Royal Charlotte yacht,		70	69	
Catherine ditto,		40	30	
Fubbs ditto,		40	30	
William and Mary ditto,		40	30	
Nightingale,		16	} Employed to receive new- raised men	
Total,		34996	22154	2447

Of the number of seamen mustered in Great Britain, Ire-
land, and channel-service, according to the office-papers,
940 appear to be over-stated, if the marines are allowed in
addition to be 2447.

Supernumeraries belonging to other ships, not included in
the above musters, 1248.

Weekly accounts of his Majesty's ships and vessels employ-
ed in North-America, according to the last returns from
Lord Howe; prepared in pursuance of a precept of the
House of Commons, dated 27th January, 1778.

Ships' names.		Complement.	Seamen mustered.	Marines must.
Carysfort,		200	136	32
Perseus,		160	112	23
Lizard,		200	138	39
Galatea,		160	124	34
Daphne,		160	117	24
Hinchinbroke,		74	50	14
Lively,		160	125	26
Nautilus,		125	99	19
Phoenix,		280	193	45
Emerald,		220	175	35
				Otter,

Ships' names.	Complement.	Seamen mustered.	Marines must.
Otter,	125	96	13
Senegal,	125	87	23
Richmond,	220	169	39
Thames,	220	163	22
Raisonnable,	500	357	80
Solebay,	200	130	30
Sphynx,	160	111	32
Dispatch,	125	85	21
Swift,	125	80	26
Zebra,	125	88	27
Vigilant,	150	92	24
Apollo,	220	213	0
Eagle,	522	396	83
Nonessuch,	500	369	78
Somerset,	520	388	82
Ifis,	350	277	62
Roebuck,	280	220	29
Liverpool,	220	150	35
Camilla,	160	109	29
Pearl,	220	165	35
York,	65	39	14
Strombolo,	45	45	0
Garland,	160	80	30
Triton,	200	74	33
Viper,	110	58	0
Magdalen,	30	24	0
Rainbow,	280	166	47
Mermaid,	200	158	36
Blonde,	220	161	37
Vulture,	125	92	27
Cabot,	60	26	9
Hunter,	110	84	23
Scarborough,	160	121	34
Albany,	125	56	18
Hope,	80	57	0
Syren,	220	141	29
Milford,	200	148	38
Amazon,	220	160	37
Renown,	350	263	49
Juno,	220	160	29
Orpheus,	220	150	32
Chatham,	367	289	47
King's-fisher,	125	98	21

Ships' names.	Complement.	Seamen mustered.	Marines must.
Alarm,	40	23	0
Cerberus,	200	147	29
Diamond,	220	164	44
Flora,	220	159	27
Lark,	220	155	34
Unicorn,	160	59	19
Greyhound,	200	164	30
Ambuscade,	220	160	40
Centurion,	350	240	50
St. Albans,	500	354	67
Preston,	367	304	56
Rose,	160	92	32
Jersey,	140	63	7
Thunder,	80	31	0
Carcass,	70	53	0
Elephant,	40	23	14
Dependence,	40	25	10
Experiment,	320	250	47
Bristol,	350	278	68
Buffalo,	200	165	23
Brune,	220	168	28
Tartar,	200	162	32
Mercury,	160	110	33
Raven,	125	75	17
Swan,	125	87	10
Scorpion,	125	81	13
Falcon,	125	107	10
Halifax,	40	38	0
Haerlem,	65	0	0
82 fail.	Total, 15980	11400	2392
Supernumeraries belonging to other ships mustered, 511			

State and condition of his Majesty's ships and vessels of war on the Jamaica station, on or before the 21st day of November, 1777; according to account delivered to the House of Commons from the Admiralty-office, 16th February, 1778.

Ships' names.	Complement.	Seamen mustered.	Marines must.
Antelope,	350	253	49
Winchelsea,	220	172	38
Southampton,	220	163	27
			Eolus,

Ships' names.	Complement.	Seamen mustered.	Marines must.
Eolus,	220	167	34
Pallas,	240	181	41
Lowestoffe,	220	172	34
Glasgow,	160	122	34
Atalanta,	100	77	18
Porpus,	125	about 100	20
Hornet,	125	91	21
Lynx,	125	85	28
Diligence,	110	102	4
Badger,	90	85	0
Porcupine,	80	75	0
Stork,	90	76	0
Race-horse,	45	27	0
West-Florida,	30	about 25	0
Bute,	160	128	26
* Niger,	200	171	44
Hind,	160	115	34
Hound,	125	95	27
Sylph,	110	88	22
Cameleon,	125	85	23
23 fail.	Total, 3330	2655	524

Total in the fleet of Great Britain, for home defence,
being 105 fail, including royal yachts, &c. 24909
Lord Howe, 82 fail, - - - 14303
In the Jamaica squadron, 23 fail, - 3196

Set off death and desertion against absent with leave and
sick in hospitals, and the number mustered about equals the
number paid by the nation.

* Mr. T. Luttrell charged the Board for delivering a fal-
lacious account to Parliament of the above squadron; as he
himself he said had seen the Niger frigate, and several more
of these ships of war, in Great Britain on the 21st day of
November, 1777.

*An Account of the Number of Seamen and Marines employed in the Service of the Royal Navy, from the 1st March, 1776, to the 30th September, 1777, upon a Medium of each; distinguishing the Seamen from the Marines, and what number of each are borne, and what mustered in the Service. **

Months.	Seamen.		Marines.	
	Borne.	Mustered for victuals.	Borne.	Must. for vict.
March, 1776,	21436	21977	6146	3241
April,	22747	23265	6409	3400
May,	24202	24851	6576	3584
June,	24684	25843	6852	3693
July,	24953	25614	7076	3755
August,	25958	26452	7173	3963
September,	26039	27174	7058	4051
October,	27117	27672	7014	4418
November,	30411	31245	7219	4596
December,	33111	33227	7401	4567
January, 1777,	36289	36309	7412	4804
February,	37551	37303	7759	5134
March,	39509	39453	7864	5358
April,	40127	40270	8170	5523
May,	41316	41768	8572	5768
June,	42044	42284	8695	5846
July,	43855	43935	8931	6108
August,	44995	44611	9139	6252
September,	45569	45372	9432	6341
Total,	631913	638625	144898	90402
Upon a medium,	33258	33611	7626	4758
M. SUCKLING.		J. WILLIAMS.	GEO. MARSH.	
T. BRETT.		R. TEMPLE.		

* This is the account which Mr. Temple Luttrell reprobated, in the committee of the House of Commons on navy affairs, as a gross imposition on Parliament and the nation; which he said was proved manifestly by the official returns of the fleet at home, of Lord Howe's fleet in America, the fleet in Jamaica, &c. which returns he had called for, and were then on the table of the House of Commons.

September, 1777, } 55000 Borne.
By the above account, } 51713 Victualled.

Abstract of the ordinary Estimates of the Navy since the Year 1770.

No.		1771			1772			1773			1774			1775			1776		
		l.	s.	d.	l.	s.	d.	l.	s.	d.	l.	s.	d.	l.	s.	d.	l.	s.	d.
1	To the Right Hon. the Lords Commissioners of the admiralty, Commissioners of the navy, with the secretaries, officers, clerks, instruments, and contingencies, relating thereto, Superannuated sea officers, £. 17857 13 1	34038	4	1	34038	4	1	46212	8	1	46212	8	1	46212	8	1	46802	8	1
3	Pensions, and other allowances, 6375 3 3	24232	16	4	26311	7	5	26351	5	9	26525	13	2	26616	5	2	27555	5	11
4	Ports, { Wages to ships and vessels in ordinary, Victuals to officers and men serving therein, Charge of harbour moorings, and harbour rigging, Ordinary repairs of his Majesty's ships in ordinary, Half-pay to sea and marine officers, Bounty to chaplains, Ordinary charge of sick and hurt seamen, To the Governor of Greenwich hospital, for the support of seamen worn out in service, who shall not be provided for within the said hospital,	3295	1	6	5110	16	11	5410	16	11	5410	16	11	5410	16	11	6480	16	11
5		3142	11	4	45147	18	7	48181	9	5	48271	1	10	50583	8	11	42529	6	0
6		2520	8	8	19773	3	0	21115	5	0	21084	16	8	22298	9	2	18815	15	0
7		4054	14	6	18071	10	0	18071	10	0	24538	2	0	24538	2	0	24598	2	0
8		1813	4	6	4307	16	11	4307	16	11	4307	16	11	4307	16	11	4307	16	11
9	Muster-masters, and other officers of the out-ports,	3245	9	6	40181	5	5	40181	5	5	40181	5	5	40181	5	5	40181	5	5
11	Wages to ships and vessels in ordinary,	18280	8	4	19773	3	0	21115	5	0	21084	16	8	22298	9	2	18815	15	0
12	Victuals to officers and men serving therein,	46566	0	0	53800	0	0	49070	0	0	46000	0	0	44850	0	0	40450	0	0
13	Charge of harbour moorings, and harbour rigging,	102843	0	0	100241	0	0	108875	0	0	111914	0	0	107440	0	0	113442	0	0
14	Ordinary repairs of his Majesty's ships in ordinary,	89000	0	0	91000	0	0	94000	0	0	107500	1	0	110000	0	0	99500	0	0
15	Half-pay to sea and marine officers,	1231	17	6	1241	11	6	1231	17	6	2231	17	6	1231	17	6	1231	17	6
16	Bounty to chaplains,	000	0	0	000	0	0	5499	8	1	5499	8	1	5499	8	1	5499	8	1
17	Ordinary charge of sick and hurt seamen,	10000	0	0	10000	0	0	10000	0	0	10000	0	0	10000	0	0	10000	0	0
Total,		388752	18	7	404725	17	6	434019	0	9	454188	4	3	454680	15	10	431904	19	6

Timber in the Navy.
In September, 1770, 15111 Loads. 14773 Due on contract.
In September, 1777, 62489 Loads. 32616 Due on contract.
* Mr. Luttrell observed this was impossible.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. Fox moved, that the present state of the royal navy for the defence of Great Britain and Ireland, is inadequate to the present very dangerous crisis of public affairs.

Mr. Temple
Luttrell.

Mr. Temple Luttrell began with an apology for the length of time during which he must trouble the committee;* but presumed he should stand excused in the opinion of every unprejudiced person, when it was considered that the several official papers now in review, and which had occasioned such extreme trouble to the naval boards, had been (almost every one of them) ordered by the House on his requisition, after reiterated charges, during the current session of Parliament, and two preceding sessions, of venality, profusion, and fraud in the present ministers for the admiralty; and which charges he was now to maintain and make good, from official and uncontrovertible proof, as he had the proper parliamentary materials in his possession. He had been greatly flattered, by finding that the sense of the other House of Parliament had gone along with him, in calling for copies of the same accounts, and periodical returns, to be laid before their Lordships; but he had reason to be still further satisfied in the candour of his own heart, to find these very testimonials precisely correspond with the state and condition of the royal fleet, as he had described it in the House before Christmas last. But though he was sufficiently used to the confidence of the admiralty-gentlemen over the way, not to be much astonished at their barefaced denial of the only regular and authentic vouchers for their conduct and expenditure, as had been forcibly demonstrated by an honourable admiral in his eye [Admiral Keppel]; yet that the majority of the members of the House of Commons should be the dupes of such fallacy, or wilfully shut their eyes and their ears, and become accomplices in the guilt (ill as he had grounds to think of majorities in these days) yet he could scarce suspect they would go so profligate a length, to abet any wicked minister whatever. The honourable gentleman who spoke last [Admiral Palliser] had alleged that there were two distinct classes of 74-gun ships; that those of the larger construction, and heavier weight of cannon, have a fixed complement of 650 men, according to the last establishment; and instanced the *Va-liant* as of the latter class, which he boldly asserted to be manned with her complete war-complement. Now he defied

* He spoke upwards of two hours.

the honourable gentleman to point out, excepting the *Va-
liant*, one ship of 74 guns in the whole navy, which
was allowed 650 men complement; and he would read the
number actually borne and mustered on board the said ship
from the last office accounts, and shew the accuracy of the
honourable member's representation. [Mr. Luttrell here
read from, the weekly returns, the number actually borne,
mustered, and victualled; and the former amounted to 539
only, and the latter to 509.] It appears, by the returns of
the royal navy, for the defence of Great Britain and Ire-
land, that at the end of last November there were, yachts,
cutters, and armed merchantmen included, in all 105 sail,
among which we reckon 45 sail of the line of battle, and of
them 25 carry 74 guns; of which 25, not more than two or
three muster within 50 men of the reduced war-complement,
nor within 100 of their proper war-complement; for I con-
tend, that less than 650 will not be found sufficient for ships
of that class, according to the modern construction and size
of ordnance. The size of a 74 gun ship, on the improved
scale, is from 200 to 400 tons more than at the com-
mencement of the last war; and with the number I pro-
pose, the sea officers opposite to me will understand, that, in
case of the necessity to quarter the crew at the starboard and
larboard tiers, both at one time, as may possibly occur in pas-
sing land-batteries, or engaging amidst an enemy's fleet, not
more than seven private men can be allowed to a 32 pounder.
Lord Anson, in the last war, found 650 men absolutely ne-
cessary for the complement of the 74 gun ships, that they
might never go on action with fewer than 600; as a con-
siderable deficiency must always be allowed for captains'
servants, and the servants of other officers, widows-men,
sick on shore, or absent on the duty of the ship in the
room of pressed men, &c. I have not selected the 74 gun
ships as in a worse state than the rest of the ships in commis-
sion; tho' the 25 sail have not within 3300 of their reduced
complement, nor within 4500 of the proper complement for
war. The second and fourth rates are still more defective,
and the 64 gun ships in the same condition; and if it
were not for an imposing ostentatious parade of pendants
at Spithead, and the advantage of conferring a multitude of
professional favours, the noble Earl at the head of the admi-
ralty would do well to turn over the seamen from one third
of the men of war now in commission, that the remainder
might be of a proper force. The honourable member who

so ably opened this debate [Mr. Fox] has justly stated that the numbers borne aboard the 105 sail before mentioned, for the protection of these islands, did not, in the month of November last, exceed 25,550; in America 15,365, being 82 sail; in Jamaica 3168, being 23 sail; and on all other stations and services collectively, that is, the Leeward-islands, Newfoundland, East-Indies, Mediterranean, together with two ships on discoveries (and a very few of an inferior description, not included in any return on your table) amounting to two men of war of 60 guns, three of 50, eleven frigates, and fourteen or fifteen sloops or armed vessels; if every one of them had a full war complement on board, they could not reckon 4500 men, making a total of seamen borne in the royal navy of Great Britain, in the month of November, 1777, to fall short of 48,583, including marines aboard, and serving ashore, supernumeraries, and every person whatsoever nominally in the pay of this country. It is evident, from the same circumstantial and accurate returns, that the whole of the victualled in the royal navy, throughout the universe, including supernumeraries and marines, could not exceed 47,407. Yet, by an official paper, ordered by this House, and delivered in before the last recess, the numbers borne in September last, previously to the very large additional supply of hands, from stripping your autumnal fleets of merchant ships, are made to come up to 55,000, and the victualled to 51,715; which must be a most daring and atrocious imposition upon Parliament and the public. However, Sir, I admit that such imposition is not without a precedent; for we are used to deceit of this nature of late years, on a like annual motion, which has been customary ever since the year 1750, when it was first approved of and admitted, to shew us, as was then expressed, the savings or exceedings on the allowance of 4*l.* per month each man, voted for the service of the year; a striking example of a similar piece of iniquity, and from the same delinquents, may be seen on your journals in the spring of the year 1772, when an account was given to Parliament of the number of seamen and marines actually borne aboard the royal navy during the preceding year, at a medium of the several months, and specified to be under 32,000; yet, within a few pages of that very account on your journals, you meet with a charge on the nation of near 2,000,000*l.* sterling; being, if you allow for deaths and desertions, the full pay of 50,000 men, at 4*l.* per month each man: consequently, there

there is a complete embezzlement of above 480,000*l*. The truth, Sir, is, that, in the year 1771, at a medium of the months, the number of seamen and marines in the actual pay of the public, fell short of 28,000 men; which proves that we were defrauded of more than 600,000*l*. in that year, upon this one article of expenditure, accounted for in the sea department; an earnest of the present First Lord's integrity at his entrance into the naval direction. In November last, the numbers actually mustered upon all the returns throughout the globe, and which constitute the real force of your navy, were fewer than 44,500; and if you set off desertion, &c. against those who may be sick in hospitals, or absent with permission, or on the service of the ship, you will find the 4*l*. per month each man, allowed by the nation, to be applicable to but few more than the numbers actually on the muster-roll.

Let us now take under consideration the monies of late years granted by Parliament, upon the ordinary and extraordinary estimates of the navy, delivered in by the Navy-office to the Board of Admiralty, and by them adopted and presented in detail, in compliance of an order of this House; with the several articles requisite to be provided for specifically represented therein. During the eight years of last war, that is, from the commencement of the naval operations, early in 1755, to the year 1762, inclusive, the ordinary of the navy amounted in the total to 1,890,000*l*. and the extraordinaries to 1,500,000*l*. being on both estimates 3,390,000*l*. (independent of navy ordnance); and of this sum, the charge of building, rebuilding, and repairs, together with the preserving the men of war in ordinary, with extra stores, came to about 1,760,000*l*. Let us now take the eight years immediately following the peace; when (as was justly remarked by an honourable member [Right Hon. Welbore Ellis, Treasurer of the Navy] in a high naval appointment) the fleet might necessarily, from the waste and destruction of your very extensive naval operations during the war, become in the utmost want of being improved and re-established. Sir, in those eight years (from 1763 to 1770, inclusive) the ordinary estimate was 3,222,167*l*. and the extraordinary 1,916,498*l*. making together 5,138,665*l*. (over and above naval ordnance); and of which sum, the building, rebuilding, and repairing, and the preserving your ships out of commission, and extra stores, came to near 2,350,000*l*. In the last eight years

(comprehending the grants of Parliament for 1778) which takes in the whole of the Earl of Sandwich's maritime administration, the ordinary of the navy has amounted to 3,232,693*l.* and the extraordinary to 3,239,379*l.* being in the whole 6,472,072*l.* of which, building, rebuilding, and repairs, preserving ships out of commission, and extra stores, come to about 3,500,000*l.* exclusive of ordnance, and exclusive of sundry large sums, charged in the account of the annual navy-debt for foreign timber, freights, various naval stores, and exclusive of the considerable cost to the nation, for replenishing the stores, &c. consumed by fire in the dock-yard of Portsmouth. So that the expence to the public, on the ordinary and extraordinary estimates of the navy, has, within the eight years of Lord Sandwich's wise and honest management of the marine-boards, more than doubled the eight years of the last most glorious war; against the charges of which war to the British empire, so much has been repeatedly urged by the enemies to that illustrious statesman, and successful minister, Lord Chatham.

Of these sums granted by Parliament since January 1771, it appears evidently from the official papers now on your table, that 2,560,000*l.* allowed for the building, repairing, and storing particular ships of war, named and reported by the navy-board, and expedient to have been repaired, and sometimes said to be actually taken in hand, has not been applied to the uses approved of by this House, and for which uses alone it could be understood to be voted. "But (say the gentlemen on the opposite benches) if the money was not applied to the specific articles for which it was asked and granted, still it has been duly laid out for other national purposes." Why then has Parliament been denied the proper vouchers for the real expenditure of so enormous a sum? Why, Sir, when I took the liberty, a few days since, to move for an account of the application of that sum, so unwarrantably diverted into other channels, was I defeated in my purpose, by that usual cloak to the speculation and infamy of ministers, the Previous Question?

If gentlemen will please to take the trouble of examining the nature and origin of these extraordinary estimates of the navy, they must be convinced that it has always been the intention of the Commons, and the indispensable obligation of government, to have the money given thereon expended towards the object for which ministers specifically required it. Annual allowances of this kind have been continued regularly for about twenty-eight years last past. Previously to the year

1750, an article in the gross was usually inserted in the state of the navy-debt, for building, rebuilding, repairing ships and docks, &c. when the jealous and vigilant eye of Parliament observing those demands unreasonably to accumulate, required that a close and satisfactory detail should be thenceforward produced of the several men of war necessary to be undertaken, and the work really meant to be done. I therefore an address was presented to the King (which stands on the journals of this House) for the proper officers to bring in an account of what might be requisite on these heads of building, repairs, &c. for the current year. The charges to this country on the several articles must of course be stated on a conjectural and unprecise valuation; for, till the work be compleated, it were impossible to ascertain the exact expence of every ship built or repaired. But there is no power ever left by the legislature, nor intended to be left, for ministers at their option to change the application of the public money, to other and very different services, without expressly having recourse again to the approbation and consent of this House. So unconstitutional, so daring and dangerous a licence, setting both law and decency at defiance, and unknown to former governments, was reserved for the present despotic rulers over an abused and a too patient people. Early in the last century, we find that the refitting of eight ships of war for the narrow seas cost 5,761*l.* 10*s.* and to completely repair twelve men of war with hulls, masts, and yards, came to but 8000*l.* this appears by the extraordinary charge given into Parliament for the years 1625, 1626, and 1627, wherein the names of the several ships are specified. The extraordinary of the navy fifty years ago (or articles usually comprised under that denomination) were from 40,000 to 60,000*l.* Till the beginning of the late war, the money annually expended for the extra services of the fleet rarely exceeded 100 000*l.* during the continuance of that war, it never went in any one year higher than 200,000*l.* and peace being concluded in 1763, when Mr. George Grenville was First Commissioner of the Board of Admiralty, it was again brought within the compass of 100,000*l.*; after 1763, it from time to time very considerably increased; but during the present noble Earl's administration (even previously to the breaking out of the American civil war) it fell not much short, *communibus annis*, of 400,000*l.* and is now augmented to so extravagant a height as 488,695*l.*

The charges in the state of the navy debt, on the long list of sundries heretofore accounted for under wear and tear, and properly

properly within the disbursements of 4*l.* per month, are a heavy additional burthen on the subject, and render the profligate dissipation of the public revenue still more glaring and notorious. By an estimate delivered to Parliament of the probable expence of the naval department for 1772, it is computed that the wages of seamen and marines, taking officers into the reckoning, will demand, one with another, 1*l.* 10*s.* per month; victualling 19*s.* per month; there must consequently remain 1*l.* 11*s.* per month for wear and tear, &c. which, on 40,000 men provided for last year, comes to 80,600*l.*; and on the 60,000 men for 1778 will not fall much short of 1,209,000*l.*; which ought to supply hospitals, rigging, stores, and all other contingencies, for the naval service, at the fullest demand, excepting ordnance, which is a distinct branch of business, and separately provided for. The navy debt is so modelled and manufactured, that I cannot but consider it as a mockery of all numerical investigation; for, upon consulting with very able accomptants, both commercial and professional, they agree but in one point, which is, that ministers have the particulars of the navy-debt thus contrived, for perplexity's sake, only to envelope in utter darkness the true appropriation of the immense sums they extort thereupon from the public. I shall just observe, in the gross, that the navy debt, at this day, amounts to as much as at the close of the last war, about three millions and a half. It increases two millions every year of the American war. When the noble Lord in the blue ribbon came to the head of the treasury, January 1770, the whole arrear due was but 1,070,000*l.* But, Sir, having now shewn at what an enormous charge your navy has stood since 1771, when Lord Sandwich came to preside at the admiralty, it will be proper that I proceed to consider, whether your fleet has or has not been improved under his management. When a very amiable and renowned naval commander, now a member of the other House of Parliament [Lord Hawke] came to the head of that department, 1766, he found sixty-one ships of the line fit for service, of which nineteen were in commission, and forty-two in ordinary, and fourteen were upon the stocks: that noble Lord, during the four years of his naval administration, launched fourteen ships of the line of battle, repaired twenty-one, and left fifteen upon the stocks. Lord Sandwich, in seven years (from January 1771, to December 1777) has built and rebuilt twenty-one of the line, and repaired thirty-four. Fifteen are now building; but there are not near so many men of war in a condition to stand

stand the seas, nor to perform service, in case of a foreign war, as when Lord Hawke went out of office. The length of time that those men of war have been in employ, which were considered by Lord Hawke to remain in a sound state, and the slender repairs they have since required, prove that the commissioners of the navy-board were not mistaken in their various reports to the admiralty respecting such ships; but that they were as serviceable and as perfect as Lord Hawke understood them to be. It has been more than once suggested in another place [House of Lords] either through gross error, or a more reprehensible motive, that Lord Sandwich had broken up forty sail of the line of battle since he came into power. Of the forty sail of the line alluded to, twenty-eight were so far from being on Admiral Hawke's list of ships in good condition, that they were not even on Lord Egmont's list, whom Admiral Hawke succeeded. They had long been sentenced to be either broken up, or cut down to a lower rate; seven out of the forty were French or Spanish prizes, taken in the last war, and in a very doubtful situation; eight of the forty were actually employed abroad or on home-duty, when Lord Hawke resigned, and the remaining ship, the *Africa*, was shamefully sold for 800*l.* three years ago, though she might for 5000*l.* have been made in the King's yard one of the best ships of 64 guns of the whole royal navy, and far preferable to many of her class, which have been repaired by the noble Earl, at the charge of above 20,000*l.* each.

The present board has possessed peculiar advantages, beyond all former ones, in carrying on that line of business which respects the building and repairing of capital ships of war. They have had the use of the large basin at Portsmouth, and all the docks have been open; whereas that basin, and the two largest docks, were shut nearly the whole of Lord Hawke's time. It were to be wished that Lord Sandwich had followed the example of his predecessor, in repairing such men of war only as would answer the labour and expence. We have now a nominal list of above one hundred sail of the line of battle, of which fifty are in commission (I speak of the official accounts before the committee, made up to November last) *viz.* five in North America, one in the Mediterranean, one in the East Indies, and forty-three on the home station. And what is the state of these men of war? The preamble to the report from the admiralty relative to the store of timber in hand and contracted for (which report is on your table) sets forth, that his Majesty's

jefty's ships in general launched in the course of the last war, having been constructed with extraordinary dispatch, and with green wood, a very rapid decay had been the consequence; adding, that the ships built immediately following the war, were but little better than the others; and indeed this is demonstrable from the repeated repairs those ships have already had, that were launched from the stocks after the year 1763, and which, though some of them have never been ventured out to sea, have been more than once repaired, at a very large expence. Now, Sir, of more than one hundred sail of the line (including those in ordinary, or disapparelled) how many were built in the last war, and have therefore a positive sentence of condemnation thus officially passed upon them? No less a number than one half. I have their names on an authentic paper in my hand; and of the remainder, several are reported, in your last extraordinary estimate, to want material repair. But it may be affirmed, that of those ships constructed last war, a great many have undergone a thorough amendment, and are now in good order. Sir, I am sorry to find, that so many as eighteen of the line have been worked upon and patched with the very worst kind of wood that can be used for such purposes, *viz.* oak timber from Stetin. The foreign wood in general imported into your dock-yards (as well that of Rostock, and the several other ports of the Baltic, as from Bremen on the river Wesel) is of a bad quality, and has but little spine or rosin. The worst timber of all is that from Stetin; as it has every bad quality attending the rest, and is besides singularly spongy and porous; and though it has been often remonstrated against in the strongest terms, by some of the most experienced and honest ship-builders in the royal yards; yet it is still a favourite wood with the reigning admiralty board, and the contractors for supplying it are much cherished, to the ruin of your fleet, and endangering the health of your seamen, who are frequently set afloat in their hammocks, from the water soaking in, over-head, through the planks. The Mars was repaired with this timber only two years and a half ago, and the nation was charged for that repair above 26,000 £. sterling; as much as she would have cost building new from the stocks. It is, I believe, in the recollection of some gentlemen now in the committee, with how positive a contradiction, and how indecent an assurance, I was treated, by some persons on the admiralty bench, previously to the Christmas recess, when I faithfully represented the sad plight that this very ship was in at that time. The House was made to believe

lieve she was in perfectly good order, and that I was endeavouring to impose upon Parliament. Sir, the Mars is found to be totally unfit for future service; and therefore entirely struck off from the list of your fleet. The Yarmouth and the Prince of Wales were also lately repaired with Stetin timber, so were many others of good exterior appearance, but which can scarce be said to ride at anchor in safety. An honourable friend of mine near me is, I find, lately appointed to a 74 gun ship repaired with Stetin timber [Captain Walsingham of the Thunderer] and built in the late war; I heartily wish him success with his command; but would not have him trust entirely to a report from those who commissioned her, of her fitness for the seas. On the account before us of the Jamaica squadron, he will meet with the Bute, reported by the admiral there to be fit for sea in November last; and within a month after, she was found in so rotten a state on her passage home, that it was impossible, even with fair weather, to keep her above the waves: so she was scuttled and sunk: which, when the workmen of the commanding-officer's ship (of the convoy) carried their tools aboard to effect, one of the tars saved them the trouble, by clenching his fist, and driving it, without much pain to his knuckles, clear through her hull. This Bute was, it seems, an old East-India trader, totally unfit for the Company's service; but held at the admiralty-board sufficiently stout and healthy for a public ship of war; and therefore contracted for at a high price. There is, I believe, another ship of a similar stamp, called the Andromeda, now going upon government employ; and I should be sorry to insure her existence for a twelvemonth, at fifty per cent. Sir, there has been a most criminal neglect in the navy department, relative to the seasoning and preserving ship-timber. I can prove, that a very excellent plan for this object of the first national importance, presented by a gentleman of very high description for his experience and industry, has not even been favoured with a perusal; while ineffectual and futile projects, which require no time for consideration, are, through laziness or partiality, very readily received and adopted. The real fact is, that in this climate your timber fit for ship-building, let it lay in store ever so long, and though in the most perfect natural state, cannot be depended on for durability, without expedients of art. We have lost or neglected the best method of seasoning timbers, so as to render them durable in the frames of ships. Our capital ships of war heretofore lasted near half a century. The Royal William, a first-rate,

cut down to an 84, was, a few years ago, the favourite ship on service of the whole navy of Great Britain, either for working on the seas, or to encounter an enemy; she was built in 1719: and I could name many others, within my observation, whose frames remained sound and fit for service thirty-five or forty years, though in continual employ. Neither are the ships of war belonging to other maritime nations so bad, in these times, as those of the British navy. The Spanish two-deckers, of 80 and 74 guns, are the strongest and most durable in the world; not only those built in the island of Cuba, of cedar-wood and mahogany, but even such as have been constructed in the European ports of Spain, by English builders, and upon the same models with our own. We have few men of war on our list that have proved so lasting as the *Centaur*, *Bienfaisant*, and the ships of war in general that were taken from the French twenty years ago; they have stood us but in little for repairs, compared with others of the same class built in England; particularly, if we take into consideration, that they have been constantly kept in commission. The number and state of Lord Howe's fleet in America has been greatly misunderstood by the House; of the eighty-two sail under his command in November last, two are hospital-ships, upwards of thirty are sloops of war, armed-merchantmen, and small-craft, and eleven of the rest carry but 20 guns. His frigates have many of them not been cleaned these three years, and one-third of the whole number were cleaned just two years ago; nine or ten are declared to be rotten or leaky; and almost every ship or vessel is reported, by his Lordship's return, to want a supply of gunner's stores. In Great Britain, and for home-service, you have no more than eleven frigates in commission, and not six in tolerable condition, that remain to be equipped on an emergency. Those infirm and discarded merchant-vessels, armed for war, and which swell the numbers of the royal fleet to so high an amount; such vessels as the *Two Brothers*, *Two Sisters*, &c. would be of little service against French or Spanish cruisers; they are precisely the ships of the very worst description; bulky and unmanageable, nor able to engage nor avoid an enemy; and no sea-officer of character and experience would willingly hazard his character in the best of them.

Let us now consider the supposed danger of an invasion from France, and the comparative force at sea of both nations, and how far we may be better or worse prepared to
repel

repel an attack, than on former emergencies. At the commencement of naval hostilities in 1755, we seized, before a declaration of war, their very best sailors, to the amount of some thousands. At the beginning of the next year, on the eve of declaring war, we had near seventy sail of the line of battle fit for service, of which fifty-five were actually in commission, from 60 guns upwards; and they mustered 25,000 men. The frigates were then three times the number of our present strength, besides 38 ships of 50 guns: and we were so apprehensive of an invasion, and so dreaded its consequences, that an embargo was laid on the outward-bound trade, and a proclamation issued, requiring the inhabitants all along the British coasts, on the first appearance or alarm of an hostile fleet, to drive their cattle to the distance of at least twenty miles from the shore; yet we had a land-army, for our internal safe-guard, of near 30,000 effective national troops, besides 24,000 Hanoverian and Hessian auxiliaries; and our resources for men (now so exhausted from emigrations for adventure, or by this fatal American contest) were entire, and abundant. The French navy, at that period, amounted to sixty-eight men of war of the line of battle, of which forty-six were in commission, carrying 32,000 men. Early in 1759 we were again terrified with threats of an invasion from the coast of Brittany, though we had then the most formidable fleet of men of war, that any country had been able to fit out since the creation of the globe. Our line of battle ships in commission amounted to ninety-five, with above 50,000 seamen and marines aboard; and we had more than one hundred frigates, or ships of 20 guns and upwards, completely manned. The fleets of France, before the engagement of the Toulon squadron off Cape Lagos, under M. De la Clue, against Admiral Boscawen, consisted of sixty-six sail of the line, actually on service, manned with 46,500 seamen and soldiers; their frigates, comparatively with ours, were of very inconsiderable force. Yet, gentlemen, recollect, that even after the decisive defeat of the French squadrons in all parts of the world, during that campaign; Sir Edward Hawke's defeat of M. Conflans, and Sir George Pocock's success against M. D'Achè in the East-Indies, by which victories the naval power of France was almost annihilated; even at that time did a pitiful armament of three small vessels, under the command of a corsair, and with a handful of troops aboard, land, without resistance, in Ire-

land, spreading a serious panic throughout that country, and occasioning the greatest uneasiness and confusion here.— France has at this crisis fifty-seven ships of the line, of which, forty, from 60 guns to 116, may be ready for sea, and completely manned with able mariners, by means of their register, in three weeks. Spain has a list of sixty-one of the line in Europe, and four more nearly built, in the port of the Havannah. They have thirty-five men of war, of very capital force, that can (I am confidently assured) go upon service immediately. I have already shewn to the committee the infirmity of our ships of war, neither have we any extensive means, at this conjuncture, of compleating their establishment; I admit that a certain number of sea-faring persons now skulk within land, who might perhaps come forth, in case of a rupture with the Houses of Bourbon, though they keep aloof from the present unnatural quarrel; but these recruits could not exceed a very few thousands. You have lately drained the nation of that part of its inhabitancy to which you might have had an occasional recourse for this end. Your supplies are exceedingly reduced; and we have voted for the current year more seamen than this country has ever yet been able to furnish for war, independent of her American colonies. You have voted above 48,200, besides marines. The most we could ever get, exclusive of marine-soldiers, in the last war, or in any former wars, was 52,000; and of these full 10,000 were natives of the continent of North-America. Besides, till the year 1760, your number of European seamen were but 30,000; though after the unexampled and heroic triumph of the British flag over every part of the ocean, foreigners from almost every power in Christendom were inclined to enter into our pay; and actually did so, in considerable numbers, from Portugal, from the northern nations, and the several little maritime states of Italy. At present there is neither the same credit stamped on your arms to induce such exotic supplies, nor have they equal lure of prosperous and profitable cruises. Let those gentlemen who hug themselves with a comfortable persuasion of our entire security from invaders, because of our insular situation, and vigilance or superior dexterity of our fleet, recollect how many invasions of these islands stand recorded in history. There have been, since the Norman conquest, twenty-four invasions of Great Britain or Ireland, nine of which have been made good, without any molestation on the seas, and
seven

seven have proved successful. Between 1685 and 1689, four invasions were effectuated. In May, 1685, the Duke of Monmouth sailed from the Texel with three ships, and landed without resistance, after beating about in bad weather nineteen days, in the English Channel, which then swarmed with cruisers, dispatched to intercept his passage. In 1688, the Dutch fleet, with the Prince of Orange aboard, afterwards King William the Third, and which consisted of fifty-four men of war (besides transports and other vessels, about five hundred) sailed from Helvoet, and stretched for the channel. Lord Dartmouth at that time lay with the English squadron, of sixty-one ships of the line, at anchor in the Downs; the weather became thick and hazy, as is usual, with the wind to the southward of the east. The Dutch men of war were full seven hours before they could all stretch to the westward of the English, and extended several miles in length; yet the Prince contrived to reach Torbay, and land his whole army unopposed; though Lord Dartmouth got under way with the utmost expedition possible, and crowded sail to encounter the enemy. I am aware that some writers of that time have hinted strong suspicions against the loyalty and zeal of the British commanders; but the fact is, they used their best endeavours, and once got within sight of the Dutch rear; but the wind shifting suddenly to the westward, and coming on to blow fresh, just as the Dutch men of war had reached Torbay (or as some authors alledge, overshot their destination in the night) they were enabled to fetch the landing-place, while the ships in chase were forced, by the same gale, so far back as the Isle of Wight. The year after the abdication a squadron of French men of war (fourteen) landed King James and several of his chief military officers at Kinsale, without meeting with the English squadron dispatched to prevent their debarkation; and not long after, a second French fleet met with the same facility of landing, and put on shore a numerous foreign army, for enabling King James to dispute the possession of that kingdom with his son-in-law. But, Sir, this alarm of an invasion, and the present debilitated state of Great Britain and Ireland, will render it absolutely necessary that we reserve two thirds of our present force for the heart of the realm. The noble Lord with the blue ribbon [Lord North] speaks in a high tone of presumption, and boasts of the "vigour of our navy:" being *particeps criminis* (I suspect) with the First Lord of the Admiralty, rather through

through mischievous policy than short-sightedness. Another honourable member, opposite to me [the Lord Advocate of Scotland] trusts much to the exertion of our superior naval armaments, "with energy." How, Sir, can you spare one ship of the line from the defence of this country, in case of a French and Spanish war? Suppose you had forty-three or forty-four of the line manned to their full war-complement; this strength would scarcely suffice to cover your harbours and coasts; you would have no cruisers, no western-squadron—What is to become of your West-India islands, your Asiatic settlements, and the important fortresses of Gibraltar and Mahon? The foreign stations, for a defensive war only against France, will require near fifty sail of the line; and against the two Houses of Bourbon united, you cannot do with fewer on these services than seventy-five or eighty. Your whole present extent of the line of battle would be little better (as was lately said by a noble Earl in the other House) [Lord Chatham] than a Mediterranean command, with proper reliefs. When have you seen so few as twenty sail of the line on that service, against the united power of Versailles and Madrid? Early in this century (the reign of Queen Anne) Sir George Rooke and Sir Cloudesly Shovel commanded a fleet of more than fifty sail of the line in that sea; and the fleet of the enemy was full as numerous; they had seventeen three-deckers. In the reign of George the First, Sir George Byng had upwards of twenty sail of the line of battle in the Messina fight; and his force was represented as inadequate to that station. In the late King's reign (the war before the last) the squadron under the Admirals Matthews and Lestock consisted of above forty men of war of the line; and the combined fleets of France and Spain proved fully their match. I shall perhaps be told, that in 1762, when the French and Spaniards were united against Great Britain, we had few more than twenty sail of the line of battle in the Mediterranean, off Cadiz; and notwithstanding which, we were too strong for the enemy: but let gentlemen recollect, that the *coup de grace* was given to the naval power of France the preceding summer; and the Spanish navy was the only one we had to contend with, and near half their men of war of superior rates were on the continent of Spanish America, or at Cuba. A very distinguished and respectable sea-officer, in another place [Earl of Bristol] having represented our ships of 50 guns as men of war of the line, was most presumptuously questioned on the propriety

propriety of such idea, by the noble Lord who presides as first commissioner for navy affairs; perhaps (as the honourable member [Mr. Fox] who opened this debate has already observed to the committee) not through ignorance in that noble Lord, but because he wished to avoid taking a comparative view of the number of 50 gun ships at this time, in our navy, to what we had in former wars. True it is, that our 50 gun ships, at present, in and out of commission, do not exceed fourteen or fifteen; there were, till within these few years last past, near thrice that number. But, Sir, there can be no doubt of the propriety of calling those ships men of war of the line. They carry the same weight of metal (twenty-four pounders and twelves) as 60 gun ships; and in action lead the van or close the rear; and of course are brought into the line of action, unless where the enemy is inferior in number; in which case they generally keep at a distance, to replace disabled vessels in the line, if occasion should require it; otherwise, to protect the unarmed part of your fleet, to chase ships of the enemy, to repeat signals, and for other contingent duties. In the last war, and the war preceding the last, very eminent services were performed by your ships of 50 guns, the Hampshire, Portland, Antelope, &c. under Baird, Stephens, and other gallant commanders. In the Toulon fight, the Guernsey, of 50 guns, was opposed in the British squadron to the *Podèr*, a French man of war of 64 guns, and actually forced her out of the line. In 1755, when Admiral Boscawen detached five of his squadron to block up four sail of French men of war of the line of battle, three of those five were ships of 50 guns. In short, Sir, the authority of the noble Peer [Lord Bristol] one of the best accredited sea-officers in the world, might have been deemed of sufficient weight to decide whether they are to be accounted among your line of battle or frigates. Sure I am, that in case of a foreign war, we shall have need to employ them as ships of the line; and there are some ships of that class now on the American station, which, from the advantage they possess of good British crews, and being thoroughly seasoned to the element, and to naval duty, I should not be in much pain for, were a combat to happen with a French man of war of 60 guns; although I do not think the ships of our fleet in general so conditioned, with their reduced establishments, as to fight at odds against those of France. I ask pardon for taking up so much time in this discussion; but am again to urge, in excuse, the very great importance

importance of the matter before you, and the peculiar manner in which I had pledged myself to Parliament, to establish and verify reiterated charges of gross error, and perilous mismanagement (not to use worse epithets) against a formidable ministerial board. It is but too evident that your ships of war fit for service are fewer in number, and those less to be depended on for duration, than ever was known since Great Britain has been a maritime power; that twice as much money has been expended within the last eight years, for building, repairing, and preserving your ships, as was applied to these objects during the whole course of the last glorious war; and that the present noble president at the admiralty-board [Lord Sandwich] after expending a sum of money thereon, which might have constructed one hundred sail of the line, and as many frigates, new from the stocks, has your navy at this day on not near so formidable a footing, as when he came to the board in January 1771. As to seamen and marines, though we are now in the month of March, you want upwards of 12,000 to complete the numbers voted for the service of the current year; for the last weekly accounts differ but immaterially from those made up to November last, now before the committee; neither will you easily find the means of supplying such deficiency, though you have raised your entrance-money to 12*l.* 2*s.* for each volunteer (including the public encouragements beyond the 5*l.* 5*s.* from the crown) to the great prejudice of commerce, and ruin of the merchants; and the men, thus dearly bought, are not in general of a mould, or professional description, to be compared with those recruited on similar emergencies heretofore. Men are not to be had for navy nor army; though for the latter you have lowered the standard almost to dwarf stature, and doubled the bounties. If the bill for encouraging seamen and sea-faring persons to enter voluntarily, which I did myself, in the last session, the honour to propose to the House, had met with a favourable reception, many thousands of your best mariners, who are now gone over to Holland, or serving in the fleets of your revolted subjects, might have been within reach at this day. At a future season, notwithstanding former prejudices, and every ministerial discouragement for the sake of perquisites, I shall revive my earnest endeavours to augment the pay of your seamen in times of peace, to provide for them under the infirmities of age, and limit the time of their servitude; till you abolish the horrid unconstitutional practice
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of impressing, and hold out these lures, you will never find the profession of a seaman much followed by the lower orders of the people; and I fully demonstrated, in the course of a former debate, that the present enormous expences to the nation in providing seamen (the natural consequence of compulsion and violence) might in great measure be saved. I look, Sir, upon those ministerial gentlemen who voted last year against bringing in a bill for such salutary ends, to be answerable for no fewer than 160 innocent lives at least, which have fallen a sacrifice to the press-warrants, and the savages indiscriminately let loose to enforce them upon free-born subjects; besides a multitude of seamen driven into foreign pay. Sir, your fleet can never cope with the confederate naval strength of France, Spain, and America: I own, high as I esteem your naval character, I should dread the contest. The best of the northern seamen of the American continent are yet in reserve; they made a considerable part of Gates's land army at Saratoga, being wisely prevented, by the general convention of New-England, from entering into naval employ, while their service could be of far greater utility on shore, and they ran less risque of falling into the hands of the British invaders. But, Sir, should the thirteen united provinces of America become free and independent, I could in reason entertain no very direful apprehensions. therefrom. Thirteen hundred miles of coast will not be found equal to the extent of the coasts of Great Britain and Ireland. In these our islands are ports for shipping more in number, and full as commodious; our population is at present in the proportion of near four to one; and our insular state is better adapted to promote external commerce, and internal mercantile communications, than is the case with that vast expanded continent of America; our climate is happier; our position, as to the three other quarters of the globe, far more advantageous; the southern coast of America during one half of the year being unwholesome, and incommoded by long calms, or irregular insidious currents; the northern provinces subject to thick, tempestuous weather, and scarcely accessible during the winter season. I believe, we have in Great Britain and Ireland more cultivatable and productive territory, than in all the thirteen seceded provinces put together; I mean, within the limits of their great chain of lakes. Cataracts immense, torrented rivers, high mountains, and impervious forests, are noble and magnificent features for painting or poetry;

try ; but in practical societies, and for the ends of agriculture, manufactures, or commerce, they cannot surely be preferred to the humbler streams of England ; to our fertile plains, and more practicable soil. While you compel the natives of the thirteen provinces to become, to a man, soldiers or seamen, in their own defence, they may be formidable indeed to your West-India islands, or on remoter enterprizes ; but if once left to settle in peace, their interest, their sober wisdom and gravity, above all, their natural love of liberty, and jealousy of military power, will dictate to them to lay aside the sword and firelock, and take up the shuttle and the ploughshare ; they will turn their thoughts to husbandry to manufactures, and to establish a pacific civil government, on the basis of industry and commercial policy. That they may rival us in several branches of trade I don't deny ; but such rivalry will serve (I trust) as a spur to the genius and ingenuity of the natives of this country, and stimulate us to make use of those superior advantages with which (as I have already observed) we are blessed by nature. Improve your oriental and your African trades ; the latter may, with proper management, be made absolutely to govern the commerce of America at European markets. Africa produces not only the commodity, but likewise the labourer to reap and to work it ; the indigo, the rice of Carolina, the tobacco of Virginia, cannot be produced without the African Negroes ; a voyage from Great Britain to Senegambia is performed in little more than a fortnight. Those who speculate upon the imperial greatness of the Americans at some future day, perhaps go far beyond the bounds of human probability. Who can say what intestine dissensions, what epidemical diseases, what bloody wars, or other ill-fated events, to crush such ambitious and glorious prospects, may or may not be found in the future history of that continent, though the first page of it is now so promising, so auspicious ? Perhaps, Sir, when just approaching towards the zenith of their glory and prosperity, Providence may (as has been, in our days, the case with the mother-country) for the completest of all curses in the nature of sublunary things, bestow such a set of ministers to rule over them, as those who have, under George the Third, precipitated this nation from the highest pinnacle of fame and happiness, to the lowest abyss of wretchedness and disgrace. I hope, Sir, we shall, in good time, before the well-affected parts of your American colo-

nies embrace the confederacy of the thirteen, now in a fair road of independence; I say, I hope we shall have wisdom enough to preserve them from the like contagion and revolt. Canada, Newfoundland, the gates of the river St. Lawrence, together with Nova Scotia, and the two Floridas, are as yet appendages of the British empire. 'Tis much to be apprehended, that we may see hostile banners braving the coasts of England and Scotland next summer, with more stripes than thirteen. I heartily join the honourable member who has spoken on this subject with his usual spirit, accuracy, and sagacity [Mr. Charles Fox] and with extreme satisfaction second the resolutions he has put to the committee; as nothing can be clearer than the inadequate state of your naval power to the present crisis of public affairs, excepting the prostitution, the mismanagement, and atrocious criminality, of those ministers whom our deluded Sovereign has fatally chosen to entrust with this main bulwark of the empire.

Mr. *Hippesley Cox*, in the course of the debate, said, he *Mr. Hippesley Cox* had lately left the kingdom of France, and was perfectly convinced a war would very soon break out between Great Britain and that country; that France was arming with the utmost alertness; that the troops were marching in large bodies to the sea-ports; and that every thing wore the appearance of military preparation.

Lord *North* denied this; and declared that the court of *Lord North* Versailles had checked her ardor, and had ordered the troops to march back from the sea-ports to the interior provinces.

Admiral *Keppel* took occasion to say, that if he had the *Admiral Keppel* honour to be employed in the service of his country, he rather wished to have a small fleet well fitted and completely manned, than a large number of ships badly equipped.

The previous question was put, and carried without a division.

March 12.

Mr. Alderman *Wilkes*, made his annual motion, respecting *Mr. Wilkes* the Middlesex election. The question was called for, when the numbers were for it 36, against it 88.

Hon. *James Luttrell*. The subject which I think it my *Hon. James Luttrell* duty to enter upon, is certainly of importance beyond my abilities to do justice to; but I beg leave to offer my sentiments to this House as a proof, that not only the first and most distinguished of its members, but even down to myself, who

who have the least pretensions amongst you, are equally willing to exert themselves to the best of their abilities and capacity, hoping to apply effectual remedies to those evils, which have brought on this nation a crisis of such great difficulty and danger.

That it would always have been more honourable and wise for Great Britain to have offered proper terms of peace to the colonies, than to have held out unconditional submission, I believe every person will admit, who is convinced by this war, that no names, however pompous and high sounding, whether the divine institution of prerogative, supremacy of Parliament, or dignaty of the nation, can sanctify to a free people acts of injustice, tyranny, and oppression.

With respect to the conciliatory plan, that it would have proved both expedient and successful to have offered such a plan some months ago, nobody can reasonably deny: but how far the measure is expedient now; that is to say, how far it is in itself adequate to obtain peace under the circumstances of the present times, remains as yet to be proved. I sincerely wish it success, and convinced of the ruinous expence and fatal consequences attending the war, I was happy to see any plan brought into Parliament, which might tend to declare a disposition towards peace on the part of Great Britain: but I cannot give credit to ministers who seem resolved to make the good which Parliament and the nation might agree to, totally impracticable to be carried into effect; ministers, who, conscious that they are an obstacle to terms, however adequate, proving acceptable in America, are capable of setting higher value on the emoluments of their offices, and gratification of private ambition, than on the peace and prosperity of the empire. For, Sir, we may debate and vote as we please, Americans, not us, are to decide the fate of the conciliatory plan; and undoubtedly they will not only take into their consideration the fairness or artfulness of your proposals for peace, but the men they are to trust to for performance and future consistency of conduct; and let these ministers be ever so much flattered by the extraordinary support they have met with here, let them call themselves by what pompous names or high titles they think fit, they undoubtedly are the men who persecuted and insulted America; therefore, Sir, by what madness can Americans be supposed to conceive that men so rewarded and in favour for having broke through their charters, and trampled on their just rights, will never dare in future to break the faith of any treaty, or by undue influence here attempt to violate the most sacred pledge of legislature?

gislature? May not America receive every proposal, whilst such men are kept in power, as an insult? May not America conceive that now a blow is meditated at liberty through state craft, which force of arms could not effect? Or how can such a wavering ministry be depended on? who appearing attached to no fixed principles of public justice, can be bound by no system of policy or maxims of government, changing the object of the war with every western breeze, and now assuming the borrowed plumage of the peaceful dove, flattering themselves America will not discern the cruel vultures that have preyed on her. Such ministers may deceive themselves, but to all the world must appear as inadequate to peace, as they have proved themselves incompetent to war.

We can only hope, Sir, that America will not think it necessary to guard against an inferior and secondary power, a certain description of men who appear to act under the responsible ministers, but who have held out this olive branch in a most suspicious and equivocal manner. I mean that sort of Janus politician, who has one face towards America, another towards his Majesty; one countenance expressing peace, harmony and unanimity, and another disfigured with the ugly passions of false pride, hatred and revenge; one voice to vote in favour of persecuted America, another to talk vehemently of insulted, degraded, powerful Great Britain. Such undecisive support can do service to no country, and I trust they will prove the last, the least in power; for sooner shall the two faces of Janus meet, than America and Britons through their mediation.

I regret, Sir, that parliament was not sooner allowed to enquire into the state of the nation; for I think that enquiry ought to have been finished, as a solid foundation for a treaty of peace, as I trust the object of that enquiry is to redress grievances, by removing all obstacles, whether men or measures, in order to prevent a perseverance in inevitable ruin. When ministers are found guilty, surely to correct vice by cherishing it is a new experiment; and perhaps a ministry, who by their present conduct bear fatal testimony of their past ruinous and bloody errors, may be thought more in character as patrons of the savages, than examples of British integrity, humanity and virtue, worthy of American confidence and esteem.

Some indeed pretend, that it is inconsistent with our duty to shew the weak and perilous situation of this country. Good God, Sir, was there ever an enquiry into the state of the nation because ministers were virtuous and Great Britain
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in prosperity? Amidst all the glories of last war, who would have moved an enquiry into the state of the nation? It can only be called for when great calamity requires immediate redress. Such is now the situation of public affairs: and it is therefore our duty to open the eyes of our Sovereign to misfortunes, in which he is not less a sufferer than his people, and to convince him that those ministers who lost his dominions, by endeavouring to make the prerogative of the crown incompatible with the happiness of the subject, have proved themselves equally an enemy to both.

If the treaty with France has taken place, I fear it is not a question that thirteen provinces, and the hearts of a brave and powerful people, are lost to his Majesty; it is rather what men and what measures, can save the rest of America? But supposing the case not totally desperate; if ruin or separation is not unavoidable, yet surely it is at least a crisis when the measures to prevent it ought to be sent out with such an unquestionable appearance of sincerity, that it may be received as a proof of his Majesty's affection and love of justice towards his subjects, rather than as an assent extorted through fear and necessity; extorted from ministers openly obstinate and cruel, till disappointed in their arbitrary views abroad and become jealous of their rivals at home.

Perhaps the noble Lord in the blue ribbon expects to be an exception, because he formerly proposed a conciliatory plan. As to the noble Lord's heart, I believe it has never been consulted in the cabinet; and as to his conciliatory plan, it appeared to the Americans indeed more plausible than unconditional submission, but not more expressive of peaceful intentions: for the theory of Parliament's desisting from taxation as long as the American tribute should amount to as much money as a vote of this House should require, was a mockery, of freedom and the practice of exacting such a tribute by force of arms, tyranny and oppression.

We know that ministers must govern the nation; the duty of Parliament is to see they do it honestly and wisely, or to endeavour to remove them from his Majesty's councils. It is likewise the duty of Parliament to support and look up to men who have more honourable pretensions to the confidence and esteem of the Sovereign and the people: in such men it is meritorious to seek places of trust; for the crime cannot consist in holding a public office; the vice is in employing the power to bad purposes. Lord Chatham was a truer patriot for having availed himself of that power which enabled him by his wisdom and virtue to raise his country to the highest pitch

of glory and prosperity, than if he had indolently contented himself with the duty of a private member ; and it is reasonable to suppose, that his Majesty may find able, vigilant, and experienced statesmen, capable of governing with infinite more steadiness and judgment, more for his Majesty's honour and peace of mind, upon sounder principles of public justice, more likely to be confided in by Great Britain and by America, than these ministers who have lost one half the empire and nearly ruined the other half.

It was long, too long, thrown out to the public, that those who contended in Parliament for equal liberty and equal happiness in every part of the British empire, were an American faction : whilst peace was attainable on such terms, ministers, were accustomed to allow that America could only depend on such a faction for performance ; a faction, Sir, who still must have the credit of not being apt to give up their opinions of public justice, nor affect to change their principles ; a faction, who warned these ministers over and over again, not to delay a treaty till such time as it should be necessary to exchange unconditional submission in America for unconditional submission in Great Britain ; and most of whom I believe still look with astonishment at persons who seem to persevere in persuading Majesty, that nothing is inglorious for a King to be reduced to consent to, except to change his ministers.

By every intelligence from America, and by the nature of man, I think it appears that America is not blind to past injuries. I think it is evident, that these ministers, are odious, mistrusted, and abhorred there ; and from that I infer, that the Americans will refuse to enter into any negotiation with the commissioners, if such ministers are to remain in power. Then what will be the use of the conciliatory plan, even suppose it to be ever so perfect ? Sir, is it not reasonable to believe the Americans will refuse to put any future confidence in men who have already betrayed them, murdered them with savage cruelty, abused them with the tongue of hatred, and appear to be rewarded instead of punished for having so done ?

May not the confidence with which such ministers trample on the subjects, cause them to go farther than mistrust of the minister, and materially affect his Majesty's honour ? Must we force the Americans to give us more fatal proofs that they are neither cowards nor fools ? Will they not justly attribute to a want of spirit in this country, not a want of spirit in that country, any idea of putting future confidence in such a ministry ? And the delay of explanations and altercations would

would only tend to cement their connection with the House of Bourbon, and tempt all America to be unanimous for independency. In order, Sir, to counteract such misfortunes as much as is now possible, but at all events as it well becomes Parliament to support his Majesty's honour, I shall move an address to prevent any misconstruction being put on his Majesty's love of justice, and sincere feelings for the calamities of his subjects, and distracted state of the empire, which certainly must outweigh in his royal breast all consideration for favourites or individuals. The address, will likewise put these ministers into the hands of their best friends, the commissioners, who undoubtedly will do them no injustice : and feeling as I do, Sir, that it is inconsistent with human nature, inconsistent with that spirit which has marked the character of the Americans, and inconsistent with common-sense, to suppose that in the moment of victory they should adopt their bitterest enemies to be their friends and benefactors ; conceiving that the arbitrary measures were not a more odious obstacle to reconciliation, than these ministers who advised them ; I should be wanting in firmness as a man, and in my duty towards my Sovereign and my country, if I sat in silence, out of respect to the private ambition of such ministers, rather than contend for the peace and happiness of the whole empire. I shall, therefore, move the following address, trusting that as ministers are grown so very liberal in giving up the most essential claims of this country upon America, that they will not be indecently tenacious of objects which are certainly of infinitely less importance, though not less necessary to be relinquished, if Parliament hope to keep or to acquire some friends in America, or conceive that for less than independence any part of the thirteen provinces will now submit to make peace with Great Britain.

“ Moved that an humble address be presented to his Majesty, to beseech his Majesty that he will be graciously pleased to instruct the commissioners, whom his Majesty may name, for the purposes of carrying into execution the act, entitled, “ an act to enable his Majesty to appoint commissioners, with sufficient powers to treat, consult, and agree upon the means of quietting the disorders now subsisting in certain colonies, plantations, and provinces of North America,” “ that in case the said commissioners shall find that the continuance in office of any public minister, or ministers of the crown of Great-Britain, shall be found to impress such jealousies or mistrust in one or more of the revolted colonies, as may tend materially to obstruct the happy work of peace and sincere conciliation between

tween Great Britain and her colonies, that the commissioners may be enabled to promise, in his Majesty's name, the earliest removal of such minister or ministers from his Majesty's councils."

Mr. *J. Johnstone*, seconded the motion.

Lord *Beauchamp* objected to the mode of proceeding; asserting that the only parliamentary one was, to address his Majesty to dismiss those ministers who were odious to the people, or suspected of mal-administration. But there was no occasion for such address, as he believed it was generally admitted both within and without doors, that the present ministers, were highly approved by the whole people of Great Britain and Ireland. Lord Beauchamp.

Mr. *Rigby* said, that he liked to hear gentlemen speak out, as they now did; crying out against men, and not measures. That if they had not told him, they looked more to men than measures, he should nevertheless have been sure of it. That the Americans respected no one set of men more than another, and had as soon enter into treaty with the present ministers, as with those who passed the declaratory act. Mr. Rigby.

Mr. *Fox* observed, that he thought, that since the time of old Cato, the doctrine of *peccata omnia sunt paria* had been exploded. That he should not have thought the honourable gentleman had so particularly been given to the maxims of that order, as implicitly to adopt them; for that he himself saw great differences between the grievances, if there were any in the declaratory act, and those which had been the cause of the present war. Mr. Fox.

Sir *Cecil Wray*. Though he wished the ministry should be removed, and even removed out of the world, for the mischiefs they had brought on this country, if it could be done legally and constitutionally; yet opposed this motion as unconstitutional; and that if carried, it would not effect the purposes intended, of promoting a conciliation with the colonies. Sir Cecil Wray.

That to remove a minister, it must either be on the petition of the people who conceived themselves ill governed or oppressed, or on the address of the Houses of Parliament; but to give a power to a part of the empire to do this against the opinion of the rest (for that the ministry had acted in conformance to the opinion of the people he inferred, from the impossibility they would have had of prosecuting their plans if contrary to it) would be the strangest idea, perfectly unprecedented, and might be a most dangerous example to futurity; as on every disgust in our own dominions, every ambassador to foreign parts might negotiate away the undoubted constitutional rights of the executive power.

Nor did he think it would be attended with any good consequence, in respect to the treaty now to be negotiated with the colonies, if they entered into a treaty; what they would expect would be good terms, and good security, for the performance of them.

That he apprehended America would demand better terms for herself when treating with her most avowed enemies, than she might from those whose general sentiments had been in favour of her proceedings; but that a removal, perhaps temporary, of any minister, could give no security for the performance of them. Had the motion gone not only to the removal, but to the utter exclusion, of all those who had poured poison into the ears of Majesty, with an appointment of men, and adoption in the King of different principles, some security might be desired from her; but that the security of the terms to America must be from the removal of the British armies, and the appointment of her own governors, and to this he apprehended we must agree.

He did not apprehend we had given up any thing, in the laws lately passed, which of right belonged to us; that we never had any right to tax, or regulate the charters of America, without their consent; but that the motion tended to giving up the honour of this nation, in its essential points, without any possible advantages to ourselves.

Mr. Aubrey. Mr. Aubrey said, that he believed the last honourable gentleman who spoke, might find commissioners having power of dismissing ministers, and that of negotiating for the repeal of all acts whatsoever, in the same page of the journals; that notwithstanding what the right honourable gentleman [Mr. Rigby] had said, "of all sets of men being alike to the Americans," he could assert from authority, that the Congress had repeatedly declared, that they never would treat with our present set of ministers, which was a strong implication at least that they would treat with another; that whether indeed they did this in imitation only of the magnanimous resolutions of our ministers that they would never treat with the Congress, he could not tell; that however, as the *delenda est Carthago* had been a favourite maxim on the treasury-bench, when England had the superiority, he thought it might be reasonably expected, that the cry of the Americans would, in return, be at least the dismissal of our ministers; that policy directed us to take every step to regain the affections of the Americans, but that it could not be hoped for, while our affairs were entrusted to those hands by which their country had been ravaged, and their friends and relations put to the sword. What reliance would the Americans put in the most pacific and most amicable declarations, when uttered by those mouths

mouths who had hitherto never talked of any thing less than checking the growth of the colonies, which he took to be only a milder and modefter expression for what they afterwards in fact attempted, the starving and extirpating them. That it was with the concurrence of this ministry that Lord Hillsborough pledged the faith of Parliament, as well as the honour of his Sovereign (for his approving Lord Bottetourt's explanation of his letter was certainly adopting it for his own) that no alteration should be made in the system of taxation: a promise, which, as soon as it had served the purpose of allaying the discontents of America, they no longer regarded, or thought of, when interest prompted them to break it. And that interest was so trivial that it demonstrated they either thought very lightly of their honour, or else meant to introduce by degrees an important and an oppressive taxation: the very reverse of what they had so solemnly promised through the medium of Lord Hillsborough. That he was convinced, that, unless it were imagined, that the sentiments of a whole people could change as suddenly as the conduct of the noble Lord [Lord North] had done, the Americans would never agree to any negotiation, while the present ministers remained in power.

Hon. *James Luttrell* in reply. I beg leave to say a few Hon. *James Luttrell.* words more, in defence of the motion; and to explain more fully the opinions which induced me to think it proper; for, Sir, if no degree of censure is due to the ministers, some may be thought due to me for having moved such an address. Comparing what I have said, with the language of their friends, and dependents, or with their encomiums upon themselves, undoubtedly I have said too much; but, Sir, it is not on the characters they bear either on one side this House or the other, that I urge the necessity for such an address; it is on their characters in America; because on the degree of confidence that Americans may think it wise and prudent to repose in them, must depend the fate of the conciliatory bill: for if performance of promises should be doubted, there can be no negotiation; and without which the conditions of the plan, can be of no utility; and certainly all I have said against the ministers, is extreme moderation when compared with publications of the Congress, or the opinions generally declared by the Americans.

I am surprised to hear a noble Lord [Lord Beauchamp] affirm that the present administration, is approved of in Great Britain! Good God, Sir, is the American war a doubt?

Is the loss of so many valuable subjects gone for ever a doubt? Is the decline of commerce, the failure of public credit, the squander of the public treasure, are these things doubted? Is it scarce a doubt that such mischiefs of the state, will tempt France, and Spain, to declare war against us? No, Sir, these are not doubts, these are the works of this administration, these are broad facts which stare men in the face, and make them look at each other with astonishment.

Gentlemen talk of degrading the dignity of Great Britain, by setting less value on the office, and emoluments of a minister, than a revenue, acts of Parliament, and claims, formerly of advantage to the crown, all of which have been relinquished in hopes to put an end to so ruinous a war. Sir, I have no such magnificent ideas of ministers; I know no *etiquette* that can justify our sacrificing the peace and prosperity of the empire, to their private ambition; and as to the objection to the motion for want of a precedent, if there has been none, permit me to add, that there never was such an occasion before, to require such a measure. The present ministers certainly provoked the Americans to aim at independency, by opposing their just demands, and forcing them into new and dangerous claims: if the same ministers, mean to persevere in similar policy, till America shall not only be independent but totally separated and unconnected with England, then indeed it matters not to the Americans, who shall be ministers of Great Britain. But, if we are to be united upon the principles of the conciliatory bills, if we are to regulate commerce, to protect each others property, to be again connected, by any tie of mutual faith and confidence, nay, even by alliance, it must ever be of consequence to America, who shall be ministers of Great Britain.

An honourable member [Sir Cecil Wray] conceived the motion, not to be sufficiently expressive, because it left the King at liberty, to turn the ministers out but for a day, or to take them again as soon into his councils. Mr. Luttrell observed that he had too great a respect for his Majesty to think him capable of trifling with an address of Parliament, and the express desire of half his dominions; he was therefore glad, that the motion was totally inconsistent, with such strange misapprehensions of his Majesty's goodness, as described by that honourable member. If indeed, upon any point of *etiquette*, the motion could be condemned, he was led into the error, by paying attention to his Majesty's first minister [Lord North] for when to the astonishment of many

he observed, that the commissioners should treat with rebels in arms, and the Congress, the noble Lord assigned as a reason, that no *etiquette* whatsoever ought to be an obstacle to the grand object of peace. That place or pension should not be an obstacle was not promised; but that no *etiquette* should oppose the conciliatory plan, he did undoubtedly declare. Mr. Luttrell said, he regretted much that the address was not moved by a member of greater importance than himself; as he thought it of consequence, and necessary to be granted; but he should sit down with the satisfaction of having done his duty to the best of his abilities, in times like these; and that would give him some consolation even in defeat.

The House divided; for the motion 55, against it 150.

March 16.

Lord *North* gave notice that next day he should present a Lord *North*, message from the King.

Mr. *Grenville* said, he believed the subject of the message Mr. *Gren-* was already anticipated by the House. But that gentlemen ville. might be truly, as well as fully, informed, before they determined what answer to give, he begged leave to move, "That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, to desire that he will be graciously pleased to order that there be laid before this House, copies of all communications from his Majesty's ambassador at the court of France, or the French ambassador at this court, touching any treaty of alliance, confederacy, or commerce, entered into between the court of France, and the revolted colonies in North America."

Lord *North* said it would be exceedingly improper to pro- Lord *North*. duce the papers; as they would expose certain persons who had given secret intelligence: and moved the previous question.

Mr. *Grenville* said he did not wish to expose any man; and Mr. *Gren-* amended his motion with, "or extracts." ville.

Lord *North* said the amendment could not be received after Lord *North*. the previous question had been moved.

Mr. *Fox* got up in great warmth, and reprehended Lord Mr. *Fox*. *North* in the severest terms, for what he called quibbling and chicane.

Lord *North* withdrew his motion; and the amendment Lord *North*. was received: after which he moved the previous question again. He desired the House to take notice, that he had never said the treaty between France and America was not signed; and added, that his policy for concealing it was good.

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The French had been the first to make it known. If it was the interest of France to publish it, it was the interest of England to conceal it. He called the French ambassador's rescript insolent and offensive; and concluded with saying, it was his firm unalterable resolution to keep his place.

The House divided; for the previous question 231, against it 146.

March 17.

Lord North. Lord North acquainted the House, that he had a message from his Majesty to this House, signed by his Majesty; and he presented the same to the House; and it was read by Mr. Speaker, and is as followeth, viz.

“GEORGE R.

“His Majesty having been informed, by order of the French King, that a treaty of amity and commerce has been signed between the court of France, and certain persons employed by his Majesty's revolted subjects in North America, has judged it necessary to direct, that a copy of the declaration, delivered by the French ambassador to Lord Viscount Weymouth, be laid before the House of Commons; and at the same time to acquaint them, that his Majesty has thought proper, in consequence of this offensive communication on the part of the court of France, to send orders to his ambassador to withdraw from that court.

“His Majesty is persuaded, that the justice and good faith of his conduct towards foreign powers, and the sincerity of his wishes to preserve the tranquility of Europe, will be acknowledged by all the world; and his Majesty trusts, that he shall not stand responsible for the disturbance of that tranquility, if he should find himself called upon to resent so unprovoked and so unjust an aggression on the honour of his crown, and the essential interests of his kingdoms, contrary to the most solemn assurances, subversive of the law of nations, and injurious to the rights of every sovereign power in Europe.

“His Majesty, relying with the firmest confidence on the zealous and affectionate support of his faithful people, is determined to be prepared to exert, if it shall become necessary, all the force and resources of his kingdoms; which he trusts will be found adequate to repel every insult and attack, and to maintain and uphold the power and reputation of this country.
G. R.”

Lord North also presented the following paper, being the copy of a paper delivered to Lord Weymouth by the Marquis de Noailles, on the 13th of March, 1778.

“The

“ The under-signed ambassador from his most Christian Majesty, has received express orders to make the following declaration to the court of London :

“ The United States of North America, who are in full possession of independence, as pronounced by them on the fourth of July, 1776, having proposed to the King, to consolidate, by a formal convention, the connection begun to be established between the two nations, the respective plenipotentiaries have signed a treaty of friendship and commerce, designed to serve as a foundation for their mutual good correspondence.

“ His Majesty being determined to cultivate the good understanding subsisting between France and Great Britain, by every means compatible with his dignity, and the good of his subjects, thinks it necessary to make this proceeding known to the court of London, and to declare at the same time, that the contracting parties have paid great attention, not to stipulate any exclusive advantages in favour of the French nation ; and that the United States have reserved the liberty of treating with every nation whatever, upon the same footing of equality and reciprocity.

“ In making this communication to the court of London, the King is firmly persuaded she will find new proofs of his Majesty's constant and sincere disposition for peace ; and that his Britannic Majesty, animated by the same sentiments, will equally avoid every thing that may alter their good harmony ; and that he will particularly take effectual measures to prevent the commerce between his Majesty's subjects and the United States of North America from being interrupted ; and to cause all the usages received between commercial nations to be, in this respect, observed, and all those rules which can be said to subsist between the two crowns of France and Great Britain.

“ In this just confidence, the under-signed ambassador thinks it superfluous to acquaint the British minister, that the King his master, being determined to protect effectually the lawful commerce of his subjects, and to maintain the dignity of his flag, his Majesty has, in consequence, taken eventual measures in concert with the United States of North America.

London, March 13, 1778.

Signed,

Le M. DE NOAILLES.”

Lord

Lord North. *Lord North* moved, that an humble address be presented to his Majesty, to assure him, &c.

Lord George Germaine seconded the motion, but said nothing else.

Mr. Baker. *Mr. Baker* thought it was not sufficient to say we were in this dilemma, which the French ambassador's paper told us; but enquiry should be made how we came into it: and the following amendment (after assurances of support): "Hoping and trusting that his Majesty will be graciously pleased to remove from his counsels those persons in whom his people, from past experience, have reason not to place confidence, in the present momentous situation of public affairs."

Sir George Yonge.

Sir George Yonge seconded, and said, that nobody could feel more than he did the general resentment at the daring insult offered us by the crown of France: that it ought to be repented, and the injury repelled; and he did not doubt we had strength and spirit to do it. But that he could not help at the same time lamenting the very distressing situation of public affairs, and the continued scenes of misconduct, which he was convinced had encouraged the House of Bourbon to offer this insult. That we should in vain offer support to his Majesty, if we did not at the same time inform him of the incapacity of those in whom he had trusted for the management of his affairs; and the little reason his people had to place any confidence in them. That it was evident to all men, the French had from the beginning fomented this American war. To put the matter out of doubt, the present notification confessed that their connexion with America took its date from the declaration of independency in July, 1776; that it was plain a negotiation had been carrying on ever since; that the servants of the crown ought to have known this; that he therefore concluded they did know it; they were unfit to govern a great country, if they did not; that, without now dwelling upon their having concealed and denied it, at least, they ought to have been prepared for this event; that, instead of this, the very treaty, and the notification, appeared to be a matter of as great surprise to the ministers as to any body else. That their being unprepared for it had left the kingdom equally so; and exposed, naked, and defenceless, after a ruinous and disgraceful war with America, for three years, to the attacks of the united force of the House of Bourbon, without any means prepared to resist it. That our land forces were barely sufficient for our defence,

defence, without any means to garrison or strengthen our distant fortresses, settlements, or dependencies: that our navy, at the utmost, consisted of no more than thirty or thirty-five sail of the line fit for service: that twice that number was necessary for the various operations of war: that we had not a ship in the Mediterranean; so that Gibraltar and Minorca were left unguarded: that we had none in the Indies, or in Africa, and but a weak force in the West-Indies: that France had strengthened herself in all these parts; and, in short, all our dependencies were in imminent danger. That our credit was at the lowest ebb; and the people had no confidence in government: that the French knew all this; and were by these circumstances encouraged to offer us this insult: that the people knew it; and his Majesty ought to know it: that we best could inform his Majesty of the case of his people; and the best time of doing it, was when we were offering him our support; to express our desire, that he would do the only thing which could make any support effectual. That nothing could tend more to depress the spirit of the people, or encourage our enemies, than the notion, that the same men who had so uniformly disgraced us, and degraded the honour of the nation, as well as diminished and exposed to danger, not only the dependencies, but the very vital strength of this empire, were likely to be still further trusted to carry on a war, the most important and alarming that ever this country was threatened with. That as experience would make it impossible for the nation to have any confidence in the present ministers, after such repeated instances of folly, neglect, and incapacity, the removal of them could alone realize any offers of support, and revive the drooping spirit of the people; and that he was convinced this single measure would cause more alarm to our enemies, from the apprehension of the probable vigour and wisdom of our counsels, when trusted in abler hands, than all the warlike preparations we might make, if directed by the same imbecility which we had hitherto experienced, and they had so well availed themselves of. He was really ashamed to see those ministers who had brought us into the disgrace of receiving such an insult, as that French paper was, upon the government of this country, should dare to be the people to lay it before Parliament, and to tell the House that they were the people ready to carry on the war. Therefore he rose to second his honourable friend's motion, which expressed the sense of the nation. That these ministers ought first to be removed, before any step is

taken. The French would not have dared to offer such an insult to any other ministry.

Governor
Pownall.

Governor *Pownall*. I do not rise to defend ministers; the object of this day is much above all such considerations. I do not take into my estimation the pretensions of any set of men as to the present ministers, by an examination of their conduct, which is to come under consideration in a few days, we shall be better able to judge how far they are to be trusted for the future. In the magnitude of this day's business, I will not mix, even in my ideas, any secondary objects. I am sorry that it has entered into, or makes any part of, the ideas of my honourable friend [Sir George Yonge] because, as there is no man in the House for whom I have a higher respect, so there is no one to whose sentiments I am more disposed, on many occasions, to subscribe. But I see that some mistaken ideas of the state of this business has misled him. He thinks that this treaty has been under negotiation (our ministers ignorant of it all the while) for two years past. From an exact narrative of the state of the business, he will see that the very idea of such a treaty has not been six months in existence; and the actual negotiation not more than three months. As I never presume to assert any thing in this House, in which I am not grounded as to the fact or the truth; as I have never asserted any thing which the House has not found to be true in the event; so, upon such important matters as I shall now disclose, I will not do it without accompanying that which I shall assert with the actual proofs. And I the rather do it on this occasion, as I think that that state of this business, which my information enables me to give, is the best commentary on the nature and purpose of the French paper laid before us; and also does best point out the conduct we ought to hold in consequence of it.

In August last, the Americans, by their commissioners at Paris, began to press the ministers of France to appear avowedly in their favour, and to give them substantial and effective assistance. But these ministers, for various reasons of state, were deaf to these calls; they did not choose, by committing themselves in the alliance with America, to involve themselves in a war with England. They did not mean to give real support to America, nor to meet in arms the force of Britain. They wished, by remaining ostensibly neuter, to encourage Great Britain to go on in a ruinous contest; and, by privately assisting the Americans, to encourage them to go on in giving cause for such contest.

test. They wished the continuance of the war; and to assist neither party further than to prolong it, and to widen the breach. On this occasion, and to obviate these ideas of false policy, the commissioners from the Americans presented a memorial bearing to this very point; of which I [redacted] some parts, most relevant to the present business.

“ Extract of a Memorial delivered by the American commissioners to the court of France, 1778.

“ The court of France supposes that the war between Great Britain and the United American Colonies will certainly continue for a considerable time longer, without any open interference on the part of France. But this supposition is even more fallacious than the former; the British government have every thing to lose, and nothing to gain, by continuing the war.

“ After the present campaign, they will therefore doubtless make it their great and last effort to recover the dominion of America, and terminate the war. They probably hope that a few victories may, by the chance of war, be obtained; and that these on one hand, and the wants and distresses of the Colonists on the other, may induce them to return again to a dependence, more or less limited, on Great Britain. They must be sensible, that if ever America is to be conquered by them, it must be within the present year: that if it be impossible to do it in this year of the dispute, it will be madness to expect more success afterwards, when the difficulties of the Americans' former situation are removed; when their new independent governments have acquired stability; and when the people are become, as they soon will be, well armed, disciplined, and supplied with all the means of resistance.

“ The British ministry must therefore be sensible, that a continuation of hostilities against the colonies, after this year, can only tend to prolong the danger, or invite an additional war in Europe; and they therefore doubtless intend, after having tried the success of this campaign, however it may end, to make peace on the best terms which can be obtained. And if they cannot recover the colonies, as subjects, to admit their claim of independency, and secure them by a foederal alliance. Therefore no means are left for France to prevent the colonists from being shortly reconciled to Great Britain, either as subjects or allies, but to enter immediately into such engagements with them as will necessarily preclude all others; such as will permanently bind

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and secure their commerce and friendship, and enable them as well to repel the attacks, as to spurn at the offers of their present enemy.

It must be remembered, that the first resistance of the colonies was not to obtain independency, but a redress of their grievances; and that there are many among them who might even now be satisfied with a limited subjection to the British crown. A majority have indeed put in for the prize of independency: they have done it on a confidence that France, attentive to her most important interests, would soon give them open and effectual support. But when they find themselves disappointed; when they see some of the powers of Europe furnish troops to assist in their subjugation; another power proscribing their commerce; and the rest looking on, as indifferent spectators; it is very probable that, despairing of foreign aid, and severely pressed by their enemies, and their own internal wants and distresses, they may be inclined to accept of such terms as it will be the interest and disposition of the British government to grant them. Lord George Germaine, but a few weeks since, declared in the House of Commons, that his hope of ending the American war this year, was principally founded on the disappointment which the colonists would feel, when they discover that no assistance is likely to be given them from France. The British adherents in America will spare no pains to spread and increase that disappointment, by discouraging representations; they already intimate that France, equally hostile to both parties, foment the present war, only to make them mutually instrumental in each others' destruction.

“Should Great Britain, by these and other means, detach the colonies, and re-unite them to herself, France will irrecoverably lose the most favourable opportunity ever offered to any nation, of humbling a powerful, arrogant, and hereditary enemy; an opportunity which no human wisdom could have produced, and which the most zealous of her patriots could scarcely have hoped for.

“But it is not simply the opportunity of reducing Great Britain which France will lose by her present inactivity; for her own safety, and that of all her American possessions, will be endangered the moment in which a reconciliation takes place between Britain and America.

“The King and ministry of Great Britain know and feel that France has encouraged and assisted the colonists in their present resistance; and they are as much incensed against her

her, as they would be, were she openly to declare war. In truth, France has done too much, unless she intends to do more. Without giving the colonists effectual assistance, it would have been better to have left them wholly  The British nation, naturally inimical to the  anxious for peace with America, that she may turn her against this kingdom; and at once gratify her revenge and her avarice. This is now the general language of the people, and of the leaders of the opposition. But any one, who reflects upon the preceding observations, cannot doubt but that whenever peace with America is obtained by Great Britain (whatever may be the conditions of it) the whole British force now on the continent of America will be suddenly transported to the West-Indies, and employed in subduing the French sugar-islands there, to recompense the losses and expences which Great Britain has suffered and incurred in this war, and to revenge the insult and injury France has done her, by the encouragement and assistance which she is supposed to have secretly given the colonists against Great Britain."

This memorial was presented about the middle of August. It had no effect; but, on the contrary, as the French ministers saw that the distresses and apprehensions, which the Americans felt, began to press hard upon them, they took that occasion (profiting by their distress) to try to drive a hard and inequitable bargain with them, on the ground of their necessities. Instead of assisting them, they rather added to their apprehensions, by seeming disposed to give up their support. When the account of General Burgoyne's advance, and of his taking Ticonderoga arrived in France; when the Americans had almost lost all hopes; the French wished to see them driven to despair. They reasoned, that, from necessity, the Americans must surrender their interests into their hands without conditions. On this occasion all negotiation with France was at a stand; and mutual reproaches arising, had almost driven matters to an open breach betwixt the commissioners and the French ministry. The commissioners wrote to the Congress, stating their situation. *Here, Sir, was a moment that Providence seemed to offer to the good fortune of this country.* In this moment, communications of this state of things came to a very private and very inconsiderable individual; they were made to me, with direct explanations, that the Americans were willing to open a treaty with this country, for reconciliation and re-establishment of peace; and that although the acknowledgment of

of their independency was a *causa sine quâ non*, yet on that point, and on all such points, with which the affairs of America and this country were entangled, they would do every thing to the honour of their parent country. In what I betray no confidencies; I discover no man's secrets. I am authorized and at liberty for all I say. The overture was made by communication of a letter, with explanations thereupon. The letter was dated Paris, 11th Septemper, 1777. It represented, that "The French ministry still kept them [the American commissioners] by their conduct, in a very perplexing state of uncertainty; for although they continued to afford very considerable assistance, yet their caution to avoid a war with England seemed to be redoubled. That if the Americans urged them upon the subject, they shrugged up their shoulders, and said, the Newfoundland ships and the Spanish galleons were not yet arrived. The Americans saw that the Congress would undoubtedly be much disgusted at this conduct; and suggested in the letter, that if the English ministers had wisdom enough immediately to acknowledge the independence of America, there was good reason to think that such a treaty might be made with her, as would put Great Britain in an happier and more flourishing situation, than she could possibly arrive at by pursuing any other conduct; and as to the mere point of honour, America, they said confidently, would help them out in that matter. This opportunity, however, they feared would be irretrievably lost in a short time; as it was natural to think that General Burgoyne's temporary success would probably rekindle the frenzy which had begun to abate in England; the event, therefore, seen in this view, might be considered as equally unfortunate to both countries."

Overtures of such a nature coming thus to me, an unconnected individual, who had no communications with ministers, as such, nor any right to such communications, what was I to do, or not to do? I decided, in the moment, that the suppression of such an important communication would have been criminal to my country. And yet, Sir, as I would neither commit myself to any individual, nor be so unjust as to commit any person in employment by such a communication, I did not communicate with the minister; I did communicate this matter where I thought it most proper so to do; and by means of which *I knew I should have an authentic answer*. I said, that communications had come to me, by which I knew positively that there was now, in the present moment, an opportunity of opening a treaty with
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the Americans ; but that acknowledgment of their independency was a *causa sine qua non*. I explained, however, that every method to save the honour of the mother country, which could be devised or proposed in the point of business, would be adopted and accepted, for appearances ; and even to aid ministers in this. Thus far I went in what I communicated ; and said I was ready to go into a full explanation of the whole ; but would make that only to cabinet council. *I had my answer, that the ground was inadmissible in the first instance.* And there this matter dropped ; and this one opportunity (such as can never happen twice) was lost for ever.

After this, in the latter end of September or beginning of October (so my information says ; but I will not be positive as to the precise period) the American commissioners renewed their negotiations with the French ministry on a new line of treaty. They formed and communicated a project of a treaty, consisting of several articles, respecting commerce, and the necessary support and protection of it, if entered into. Several of these articles, I think eight or nine, were accorded to,* as a kind of stipulation, or convention ; but with conditions annexed, to be reciprocally expected from the Americans. This therefore stood *ad referendum*. Several copies of this *project in convention* were, in the latter end of December,† by different ships, sent to America ; and in this state this matter remained before Christmas. May I be permitted here to refer myself to the House, and to ask, whether, after I had seen the Americans, through extreme pique at the conduct of the French towards them, and in despair of their own affairs, almost of the further existence of their cause ; coming to England, and wishing once more to treat : yet when under circumstances by which they were reduced to the lowest ebb ; when they had lost all hope in their own resources ; when they despaired of any assistance from abroad ; still refusing even to have propositions made towards the opening a treaty, unless on the ground of their independency ; and when afterward I had known that they and the French had convened in articles and stipulations for commerce, which totally superseded our act of navigation ; whether I had not ground for saying what I did before Christmas, when I first announced to this House, and perhaps to the country, *that our supremacy over America was gone for ever ; and that our navigation act was abolished and abrogated* ; And as to the particular state of the negotiations, had I not ground to say that they remained as a convention

* In November.

† The 27th.

on

on a project of a treaty sent to America, but not signed, precisely as I stated it? I wish the act had been attended to and acted upon, at the time. It was perhaps even then

The French had continued thus to train on us, and refused to sign any treaty; yet in the [redacted] that the noble Lord [Lord North] brought forward, in this House, his idea of reconciliation between Great Britain and America; and that the French saw it was such as might be made the basis of a reconciliation; they immediately sent to the American commissioners, and at once told them, they were ready to make and sign an actual treaty with them, on the ground of the project which had been proposed. This is the treaty referred to in that paper which the French minister delivered to his Majesty's Secretary of State. This treaty, preceded by such conduct as the French held towards the Americans, before they saw that they had drawn themselves into the necessity of signing it; this treaty, into which the French have been precipitated before they really intended; does not alter my idea of the probability of our having *even yet peace with America, if we will but take the way that leads to it, and the only one that is open.* Nothing but the perverseness of our own conduct can cross it. We know that the Americans are, and must be independent; and yet we will not treat with them as such. We acknowledge it in our own acts, and act and enact under the influence of this idea; and yet we are not to recognise it in the only place where it can be of use, and where the crisis of our affairs demands it. So far as the measure of reconciliation has its basis in the acts which are passed, the legislature of this country has actually and in deed (however we may cover our shame in words) given up all right of government over the Americans. If government itself retains the least idea of sovereignty, it has already gone too far for that; if it entertains the least hope of peace, I say it has not gone far enough; and every step we shall take to put the Americans back from independency, will convince them the more of the necessity of going forward.

Look into the four great acts of their proceedings; slow, but in measured steps; feeling their ground before they set their foot on it; yet when once set, there fixed for ever. Their first great act was their DECLARATION OF RIGHTS in 1774. The rights there *declared, claimed, and insisted upon*, are incompatible with provincial, and inapplicable to

to any other than a sovereign independent government, having all the powers necessary thereto within itself.

Their next great act of state was the deduction of their reasons for taking up arms in defence of these rights, published in A MANIFESTO to all the world. Can those reasons and allegiance stand on any ground of agreement? Can they and supremacy stand any where on the same ground?

Their next act was the DECLARATION OF THEIR INDEPENDENCY; not suddenly taken up as an ebullition of enthusiasm, or in the bitterness of passion and revenge; but rather as coming on of course, by a train of events, linked together by a system of politics. This declaration was not made till two years after the first act, and not until July, 1776; and not even then, until they were prepared for their next great act, their act of confederation.

After having *renounced their allegiance to the crown of Great Britain*, and all political connection with the nation; each province (thus become an independent community) formed and established (as an original act and compact of the people) their respective governments; and these, thus formed by a mutual and indissoluble ACT OF CONFEDERATION, have established a great republican empire; which, by principles of nature, and not of politics, necessarily sprung up from the ground whereon their affairs stood.

If these people, when they viewed their cause abandoned, as to all assistance which they looked to in Europe; when sinking, as to all appearance of what the utmost exertions of their own resources had done; when clouded with despair; would not give up the ground of independence, on which they were determined to stand; what hopes can there be, and from what quarter, that they will now, when every event of fate and fortune is reversed to us, and turned in their favour; when they feel their own power able to resist, to counteract, and, in one deplorable instance, superior to, and victorious over ours; when they see their cause taken up in Europe; when they find the nations, amongst which they have taken their equal station, acknowledging their independency, and concluding treaties with them as such; when France has actually and avowedly done it; when it is known that Spain must follow, and that Holland will—what hopes can there be, and from what quarter, that they will, all at once, pull down their own new governments, to receive our provincial ones? That they will dissolve their confederation? That they will disavow all their reasons for taking up arms? And give up

all those rights which they have have declared, claimed, and insisted upon, in order to receive such others at our hands, as supremacy on one hand will, and dependency on the other, can admit them to? It is nonsense, not even to be listened to! And as to that silly story of their having been willing to rescind their vote of independency, it has not even ground to set its foot upon. If they give up their independency, they *must rescind their whole system*, contained in the four great acts of state. That there was a period, in last autumn, when they deliberated whether they should wave the ground of independency, in order to get on the ground of treaty, is true; but the proposition itself went no farther than that; nor was that proposition adopted.

Although I am certain, and I think every one must see, that we shall never conclude any peace, or come to any settlement with the Americans, but by treaty with them as independent states; yet I do not think that Parliament should immediately declare them independent. What I mean and wish to urge is, that Parliament should extend the powers of the commissioners, to the enabling them to treat, consult, and *finally to agree, and acknowledge the Americans as independent; on condition*, and in the moment, that they will, as such, *form a federal treaty, offensive and defensive and commercial, with us*. If the commissioners are not so empowered, they had better never go; their going will be a mockery, and end in disgrace. I say not these things to embarrass the business of the commission; on the contrary, I wish to give efficiency thereto, and to make plain the way of the commissioners. I hope nobody in the House will think I am acting this part, as though I was to be one of them. I most certainly shall not be one of them; yet I wish the business to have a good issue. Such we may have; we may have peace with America, if we will but once quit the ground of theory, and take that which lies open before us in fact.

Although the French, in order to take advantage of that time which we have lost, have, on a sudden start, signed a treaty with the American commissioners at Paris; it is not however yet ratified by the Congress in America. And if we do not lose more time, we may yet be in America with our propositions before it is ratified. If we do get there in time, and our propositions are such as I have suggested, such as come up to the point which the present crisis demands, I have every confidence, that we shall find in the Americans a preference and a predilection in favour of their old

old connections. Beside this, if every other part of the ground be taken equal, it will be more their interest to form commercial connections with us, than with the French; at least, to have (at the same time) such with us as they have with the French. In all the maritime towns of America, commerce is diffused at large; almost every man that keeps a store is a merchant; but of these, not five, I believe scarce one, in a hundred, understands one word of the French language. How are these then to carry on this French commerce? It must fall into the hands of the few who accidentally understand this language. The understanding French, not the having a capital; the having had French, not the having had commercial connections, must become the requisite qualification of a merchant. The many (if this matter comes to be considered in any of these towns) will say to the few: All this is mighty well for you, gentlemen; but it will not do for us; we can have nothing to say to propositions which must be impracticable to us. This, I say, will be the case, if we admit their independency; but if we do not, the great interest of the states will not give way to the private advantages of this or that set of merchants; and every other consideration will vanish before their zeal for independency, which they have fought their way up to, and will maintain.

Although I may appear perhaps to some to have made a long digression; yet I hope I have brought it to the point under consideration, and have shewn, that if we will take our measures according to the actual circumstances of our situation, which, I say, are not altered by the invidious conduct of the French, we still may have peace with America. The conduct of the French is a still stronger and additional reason why we ought to adopt this system: and every thing which has relation to our safety, honour, and even perhaps existence, requires that it should be adopted on the instant, directly, without losing one moment, or hazarding the cast of one single event; a hazard which is not within the rules of insurance to calculate.

If you do not adopt this idea of a foederal treaty with an independent nation, let us see how the treaty will commence. The Americans will, before they begin any conversation towards treaty, demand, 1st, That the commissioners withdraw the troops. 2d, That they open the treaty as taking an equal station with the Americans, as one sovereign state with another. 3d, That they engage to reimburse

burse them the expence which we have put them to; and to secure to them *dedomagement* for the losses which they have suffered. They know that we are not in circumstances to make either this reimbursement or *dedomagement* by actual payment of money; they will therefore propose that the commissioners engage to give up to them Canada, Nova Scotia, and the Newfoundland fishery, in lieu thereof; and this they will insist upon. This I know, and this I affirm. Now what answer can any of the commissioners devise to give to these demands? If they treat with the Americans as with revolted subjects whom they wish to reclaim, and whose peace they must purchase at any rate, they must either risque all peace in the very threshold, or agree to these cessions. On the contrary, the acknowledging the Americans as independent states debarrasses this business of all such difficulties; for what claim of any such sort can any independent state with whom you are at war ever have? Had any nation ever such? And did any ever make such? It is not only become necessary to our situation, and the state of things, that we should acknowledge in politics what does actually exist in event; but, *rebus sic stantibus*, it is become the wisest and most politic measure that Great Britain, respecting herself, can now take. Her act of navigation, which I must always distinguish from the acts of trade, which is an act to encourage British seamen and shipping, will then give to British seamen and shipping those preferences and advantages which the American seamen and shipping have now the sole profit of; and she will not lose, in the profits of her own trade, more than she now incurs expence in protecting that of America. If this was the proper time for such discussion, I could shew this to demonstration throughout the whole system. If I could entertain an idea that any man in this House hoped to regain the dependency of America, I would shew what that dependency would be. It is enough now to say that it would be a delusive and a ruinous one to the interest of this country; and that the supremacy would become dangerous to the constitution of it. It is enough, perhaps too much, to have said and stated what I have done. I only throw it out to try the sense of the House. If they should so see their interest, as to think this measure a proper one, I should be ready to explain the whole, and to move it; nay, I am even ready now. I have a motion to that purpose in my pocket: but it is too much to be risked hastily. The only use therefore that I wish to
make

make of the doctrine I have held, is, to convince the House, that the power and interest of this country is yet on safe and good ground, if we have the wisdom to take it; if we do not, it matters little what change we make of our ministers; or what commissions or commissioners we send to America. If we do adopt it, the measure will execute itself; and it signifies very little what ministers we keep, or whether there be any at all. Some gentlemen, I see, laugh. I remember the time, and a very critical one too, in the last war, in actual time of war, when for several days there was no minister in this country. When, in the year 1756, I came over from America, with the plan and proposal of changing the object of the war, by making a direct attack on Canada, commenced by the siege of Quebec; I was in town for several days, without any body being able to tell me to whom I was to address myself. Mr. Fox was just then gone out, and no successor was as yet fixed upon. At last I had the pleasure to find that Mr. Pitt became the minister; and from that happy moment commenced the æra of all the successes and glories of the last war. Now here, if an individual may be permitted to express his private wish; and I think one may; at least, I will venture to hazard it; I should wish that the present ministers would advise his Majesty to take that same great man, now Lord Chatham, to his councils, and to their aid; and that they would, as the ministry of the former reign did, lend him their majority. In the moment in which it was known that he had a lead in the councils, and the direction of the forces of this country, in that moment we should have peace in America, and should lower the haughty crest of France.

Thus much as to the state of our negotiations with America. In my opinion, the state of the French negotiation does not make any alteration in them. We never could have obtained peace without acknowledging the American independency; we never could have obtained any exclusive terms of commerce. The French treaty is not exclusive; and the ground is now open to us, if we are not too proud to tread upon it. If we lose no more time, we may now have just as good terms as we could before have had. And whether we do it at first or last, with a good grace, or grudgingly and of necessity, the event will be the same; we must finally acknowledge the independency of the free states. On the other hand, there is rather an advantage to be derived from this French notice; it may oblige ministers to think of such
measures

measures, and may justify them in adopting such. Although it might have been wisdom, prudence, and good policy, to have taken up, of their own motion, this measure; yet perhaps they would not have been so well justified in it as they will now be.

As to the apprehensions and fears, almost to the despairing of our safety, which my honourable friend has expressed; I own I do not feel these fears; and, with the leave of the House, I will tell him the reason. I shall say nothing to the state of our force or defence in Europe; I will speak only to that part which it was once my business to understand. The share I had last war in the plans, as well as execution of the measures in America, give me some right to speak with confidence; and I shall speak out without reserve. Those who never knew, or those who have forgotten my services, may see all that I say, and perhaps more, justified, by referring to the Secretary of State's office, or the Board of Trade.

Having lost those provinces which experience hath shewn we could neither govern, nor subdue, nor consequently maintain ourselves in, *by the system we had adopted*; I think, instead of being weaker, we may become the stronger, by the event. If we take such part of the troops as we have now in America, and so place them in Canada and Nova Scotia as to put those provinces out of insult, at least, out of danger, we may certainly secure that point; and there can be no excuse if we do not do it. We shall be able to maintain ourselves in those parts of the dominion which we do possess, and can govern. The rest of the troops there, which are now employed to no effect, and to no end, may be so much additional effective strength, which may be employed either offensively in the West-Indies, or brought home for our defence here. The having lost the provinces on the continent, will become a more urgent motive to keep good guard over those of the isles. The ministers now will have it in their power to send a proper defence to the West-Indies; and they will become the safer by our losses in other parts.

The great fleet, which seems at present totally useless and unemployed, may be so disposed, that part of it may be stationed to cover and defend the sea-line of our provinces, Nova Scotia and Canada and the fisheries; another part may be sent to strengthen our squadrons in the West-Indies; while a third part should be formed in a squadron, consisting of frigates, sloops of war, and armed vessels, and stationed

stationed about the Bahamas, so as to command and protect the *debouchée* of our West-India navigation; with orders to join either the North-American or West-India squadron, as the case may require. I say, Sir, *taking up and concluding our American negotiations wisely*; allowing facts to be facts; and concluding a peace with the Americans as independent states; and then *disposing of our fleets and armies* in America, in some such arrangement as I have mentioned; we shall not only be out of all fear of the French, but we shall begin to find, that we have a more collected, stronger, and effective force, than ever we could have had under our former circumstances, and *under our former system of administering them*.

In this confidence, therefore, passing by all idea of who are, or who should be, our ministers, which I am totally against mixing in this day's business; I am for the address proposed, in every sense and feeling of the resentment it expresses.

Mr. Conolly said, he got up to state the dangerous and defenceless state of Ireland; and called upon the House to give their attention to that injured but yet faithful country. That when he spoke of the fidelity and loyalty of that country, and of its attachment to Great Britain, he must confine himself chiefly to the Protestants there; but that these Protestants, without assistance from hence, were so far from being able to give aid to this country, that perhaps they were not able to defend themselves. That upon a late very exact numeration of the people in Ireland, there were found to be 2,120,231; of which, the Protestants were 677,804. That these Protestants were chiefly in the northern parts of Ireland. That in the southern provinces, should the French land any force that looked like being serious, or could be depended upon, there were at least 150,000 ready to join them.

Mr. Mellish. I must declare myself under an anxiety I never before have felt; ignorant of our real situation, ignorant of ministerial information; but determined to give my opinion on his Majesty's message according to the information before me. I little expected to have seen the time, when this House would tamely have submitted to the influence of the House of Bourbon. Sir, this is a declaration of war, intended as such, and ought to be answered by us in the same style. The address moved by the noble Lord appears to me to be framed in the office of a secretary of state, and not in that of the minister. It seems calculated for

for negotiation, where France intended no negotiation; and, consequently, where we should give a formal defiance to this insult. He then argued much on the weakness of France; said that we could borrow the principal sum, where they could get only the interest: in short, that we could raise six millions, where all the accuracy even of French financiering could scarce get 330,000 from the people. That that the nobility and gentry not in the army were against the war; the people detested it; and none but the army wished it. That their army, though great and respectable, had their enemies; perhaps Bavaria alone might employ them. That their navy made more figure on paper than at sea; and he did not doubt we should give as good an account of them as we had formerly done. That as to America, he remembered what a learned gentleman had observed some years ago; that there never was a revolution in which one-fifth of the people were engaged: that the American army might have silenced the opinions of the more quiet men; but it was by no means a proof that we had no friends in America; and that he did not doubt, when the bills giving up taxation, and repealing the charter-bill, and the tea-duty, reached them, we should have more; and still more, when the inhabitants found their governors were giving them up to France. That he never called Americans cowards; nor did he ever think them so; neither did he think them so brave as to wish to encounter unnecessary difficulties. That all men were equally brave, in proportion to their military education: that therefore Americans had one advantage, as a militia, over most nations, that they were instructed from children in the use of the firelock. So far he would allow them brave, but no further. That he trusted their sense would shew them the advantage of an accommodation with us. That though these were his sentiments, he heard with attention and respect the sentiments of others; and therefore when he heard some gentlemen propose the independency of the colonies, though he differed totally, he still did not say it ought not to be a subject of argument in the House. But that the House of Bourbon should dare to talk to this nation of the independency of our colonies, was what a British House of Commons would not formerly have borne. He was therefore dissatisfied with the motion of the noble Lord, as negotiating, not answering the insult. That, without entering into the question, how far ministers were or were not capable? he thought it always a dangerous

dangerous experiment to change a ministry on the beginning of a war. It was not so fatal as a minority on the death of a king; but not much less fatal.

Mr. Mellish went on: As to the measures to be pursued, I do not pretend to advise; but I will venture my opinion, that, for our home defence, the militia should be called out, both here and in Ireland. That it should be considered whether the army in America could make any decisive stroke; if not, I think it should be drawn off; not for the defence of a Newfoundland fishery, Nova Scotia, or our West-India islands: but for the attack and storm of the French islands; to teach the insolence of France what must ever be the consequence, if they dared to affront either the British flag, or the British arms.

Mr. Pitt mentioned and lamented the baneful influence Mr. Pitts which had for a long time pervaded, and still continued to prevail over the councils of this great country.

Mr. Jenkinson. However fate may have disposed the events Mr. Jen-
kinson. of this war, it is on the ground, and in the principles by which it became necessary, *a just war*. There never was, on the most popular plan of government, a doubt, but that every part of the state, should bear its share of the burthen of the state as it shared in the protection. Although the Americans did not deny this; yet when they insisted that they ought not to pay any taxes towards the support of government, but what they paid in the profits which we derived from the monopoly of their commerce, they did absolutely refuse to pay in the way of tax or contribution; when this ground failed them, and they took the use of reasoning that this government had no right to tax them for those purposes, and put their resistance on ground that disputed and denied the sovereignty of the crown, and the supremacy of the whole government, and set themselves in array to oppose those legal methods by which government had a right to enforce its authority and laws; then they went into direct rebellion, and this war on the part of this country, *was a just war*. When the country which felt itself almost sinking under the burthen of taxes which lay upon it, found those Americans (in bringing up of whom, and in the protection of whom, they had in two successive wars incurred such enormous expences, as our taxes, heavy as they were would scarce pay the interest of) would not only not pay any thing in aid, but most ungratefully denied, that we had done any thing on their account, or that they had any obligation to us for what we had done: that they now disdained our protection; and even refused to give
17. May
quarter

quarter or shelter to the troops that the King sent there for their protection, and the maintenance of his dominions ; that they refused all intercourse with us; prohibited our commerce, and finally plundered our merchants acting under our laws, and not contrary to any which they pretended to have.

Then the apprehension of the merchant was first alarmed ; then the manufacturer was at last, though slowly, provoked. The country would no longer sit tamely to bear the insult ; all degrees of people arose in one unanimous resentment, and *the war became a popular war* : and therefore, Sir, I say this war with America *was a just, and has been a popular war*. Why it has not been a successful one, I will not now take upon me to say.

The want of success, and the length of its continuance, has at last brought upon us the insults and meditated attacks of our enemies, the French, who are become their allies. And it seems as if it was the duty of a good man, who loves his country, to paint our affairs (become thus indeed perplexed) as though they were desperate, and that we had not even the means of defence left to resist any attack which the enemy might make upon us here at our own doors. The force that we have in Britain has been represented as nothing. Now, Sir, I may venture to affirm, on certain authority, that, exclusive of officers and serjeants, we have now in Britain seventeen thousand three hundred effective men, rank and file. As to the state of our funds, the fall is not so great, as the means used by our enemies abroad, and our interested enemies at home, to sink them, ought to have made them. The time was critical and perilous. There was a call in more countries than ours for money on loan : greater calls were still expected ; the very paper on your table would not have been presented at this very moment, had it not been the moment in which the French politicians and their advisers thought it would most affect the present loan. Instead of that effect (by its not having affected it so much as they, and those who knew more of the matter than they, expected) it has shewn the relative strength of our credit. The loan has even rose to-day ; and I understand the first payment will be made.

But, Sir, credit, which is nothing but opinion, must from its nature be estimated as relative ; having no absolute basis but trust. The question is not, whether I shall trust or not ; but whom I had best trust. In this view of it, which is the real one, all the monied world had rather trust Great Britain, than any other power whatsoever. While interested and party people decry our credit, look at that of France. The French

French could not borrow above 1,000,000*l.* and that loan is now twenty *per cent* under par.

France, even in time of peace, has not been able to go on upon her peace establishment ; and yet, under these circumstances, she has a marine to raise and form

In short, Sir, to speak out ; it is not our credit alone, it is not the French credit, so much more than ours, that is sinking. This phantom of credit, whose whole foundation is trust and opinion, and which, by a mutual concurrence of that opinion and trust, has created funds, and become as money to the great trading maritime powers of Europe for so long a time, has now at last almost spent itself in its operation ; and the great politicians of the world begin to look only to real force, supplied with real money ; while the efficiency of the great maritime powers who have made their exertions on credit is every where at the highest pitch to which it can go, and will every day decline.

The great military powers in the interior parts of Europe, who have amassed together great treasures, and have modelled their subjects into great armies, will in the next and succeeding period of time, become the predominant powers.

France and Great Britain, which have been the first and second rate powers of the European world, will perhaps for the future be but of the third and fourth rate.

But it is not in the sinking of credit only that France is distressed ; The spirit of free enquiry, and the effects of an extended commerce, have introduced a spirit amongst the French people that is wholly incompatible with their government ? Contrary to all precedent, contrary to all ideas of that government ; a reasoning has propagated, and even entered into some of the lines of business, that the *vingtieme* is a *donne gratuite* and that every individual has a right to judge of it.

Besides this ; one bad effect of the zeal with which they affected to take up the American cause, and which they now learn in earnest to have an affection for, has tainted their principles with the spirit of republicanism.

These principles of liberty always diminish the force of government ; and if they take root and grow up in France, we shall see that government as distracted and unsettled as any other. I do not therefore think we have much to fear from France. We may repose ourselves on the superior credit and actual strength of our own government, and ought not to suffer any insult to go unresented.

General *Conway* began by expressing the resentment he Gen. *Con-*
felt, as a Briton, at the treatment we had received from *way.*
France, by that paper ; and was sorry to see the state of hu-
miliation

miliation this country must be in ; that any nation had dared to conceive the idea of delivering such an insult. An idea of the danger that had been expressed we were in, from an invasion ; and defenceless state to repel any such. On that ground, he said, he did not adopt the fears people had expressed, nor did he see the case so dangerous as people had represented. He owned that Ireland was in a defenceless state ; but that he thought it impossible for ministers to see, and not take immediate care to provide a remedy. As to England, he had not the same apprehensions ; for that we had, including the militia, thirty-three thousand troops with which we could take the field. Besides which, he hoped, and did not doubt, but that when our country was invaded, our rights and liberties attacked, every individual in the country would shew the same spirit that the Americans had done : and he thought that a pretty strong example, and proof in fact, how impracticable a thing it was to invade a free country, while the spirit of liberty remained in it ; which he hoped was not yet dead in this country. But though this was his idea respecting Great Britain, and an invasion of it, he did not see that we were in any situation to carry on such a war as that we were now threatened with.

That what troops we had were mostly lost in a service where they could do no good ; nor did he see how it was possible to recruit them to their proper establishment, much less to reinforce them so far as must now become necessary. That we had no allies to add to our own forces ; and in this situation the force of the whole House of Bourbon was now united to the power of America. When we look back to the advantages which we derived from that force last war, was there a man upon earth who could think it possible, now that force was against us, that we could ever shew our face, or appear upon the seas ? That our trade must be totally undone. That, in short, there remained nothing for us but to try to regain the Americans. There was no other measure we could possibly take, but to immediately adopt the proposal thrown out by the honourable gentleman at his left hand [Governor Pownall].

That he had proved to demonstration that there was no other method of having peace with America, but acknowledging them to be what they really were, and what they were determined to remain, Independent States ; and making a treaty and alliance with them as such. That peace with America was absolutely necessary ; and that every other idea of peace

was

was only deceiving ourselves, and exposing the public to a hazard that must end in disappointment, if not ruin, to this country. That he thought he saw in the House a secret conviction of the truth and necessity of this proposition, which he hoped their good sense would ripen into some act on the present occasion; for if it did not, the opportunity to be derived of any good from it would be lost; and we should be at last obliged to come into that from necessity, which we might now make some merit of. That he always thought, as things were suffered to go on, that this would be the ground on which we must make peace at last; and that he had received great comfort from the proofs that the honourable gentleman had given that that ground was still open to us. And indeed, as a further proof, that gentleman had communicated to him, since he spoke, a matter that did absolutely confirm it; which was, that he had seen a letter of Doctor Franklin's, shewn to him by the person to whom it was written, since the signing the treaty between France and America; wherein he said, that if Great Britain would give up the idea of supremacy, and treat with the Americans as Independent States, she might yet have peace with America. If that peace was necessary, as every body must see it was, what had we to do, but immediately to take up the idea that had been so fairly and manly thrown out?

Lord *North* repeated his opinion relative to a resignation Lord *North*. of his employments; and as the interest of the empire, no less than his own pride, required his continuance in office, he was determined not to quit the helm while the ship of the state was tossed about in a storm, until he should have brought her safe into port. He could not see any great foundation for the present alarms of the public: if the stocks were now low, it was merely the effect of a sudden panic, the general concomitant of a dread of war. Since he had come into the House, he had received intelligence that the first payment of the subscriptions to the new loans had been made: the seeming backwardness to fill the loan was to be attributed to the largeness of the national debt, rather than to the approach of a war. Great Britain had always been so punctual in the payment of interest, that she never can want money. The dread of an invasion was a mere bugbear; and though such a thing should take place, the nation had very little reason to be apprehensive for the consequences. Our navy never was, at the commencement of a war, in such a flourishing condition as it is at present; the new levies were

were almost compleated, and would, together with old troops at home, form a body of 30,000 men for the defence of the kingdom. That the public might be the more at ease with regard to an invasion, his Majesty had resolved to have recourse to that constitutional measure so often recommended by gentlemen on the other side of the House, and which, he hoped, would be sufficient to silence all our fears, and set our minds at rest: the object the King had in view was to call out and embody the militia; which, he flattered himself, would be able, in conjunction with the regulars, so to guard the coasts, as to make an invasion a matter of too much difficulty to be attempted by our enemies. The insult offered by France to this nation was of the most disgraceful nature; his Majesty, in resentment, had recalled Lord Stormont, his ambassador at Versailles; and as he knew that the honour of the nation was dear to every gentleman in the House, so he trusted that there was not a man in it who would not risque his life and fortune to wipe off the stain that it had received; and that consequently no one would refuse to agree to an address, which was to assure the King, that he should find in his faithful Commons every support necessary to maintain the honour of his people, and the dignity of his crown.

Col. Barré. Colonel *Barré* said, if Lord North had been a pensioner of France, he could not have acted more in the French interest than he had done. And here he recapitulated the several acts brought in by his Lordship against the Americans. Each minister, he said, had been guilty in his different department, but the noble Lord had been guilty in all.

Governor Johnstone.

Governor *Johnstone* observed, that he always had been, and still was, against the independence of America. He always saw it in the light of imaginations and visions, which gentlemen here were pleased to amuse themselves with. It was not the idea of America herself. He said he was extremely sorry to see the idea adopted here by gentlemen with whom he had acted; that if he found he had been acting with gentlemen who were ready to give up the supremacy of this country over America, and to acknowledge the independency of America, he would sooner cross the floor, and join those ministers, whose measures, in beginning and conducting this war, he had always disapproved, than continue to act with those gentlemen who were entailing ruin upon this country.

Mr. Dundas.

Mr. *Dundas* [Lord Advocate.] said, if there was no other help for it, and nothing else could be done, he should rather
with

wish for the proposition thrown out by the hon. gentleman [Gov. Pownall] of forming a foederal union, than losing America totally, or letting her fall into the hands of France. He did not chuse to part with America as an enemy. But as that time, he thought, was not yet come, every measure should be tried first; and if it was unavoidable, we could but acquiesce in what we could not prevent.

Sir *George Yonge* said, Very well! you mean to come to that at last; and you now let us see you mean it. Sir *George Yonge*.

Mr. *Aubrey* said, that since the noble Lord in the blue ribband had so strongly expressed his desire of retiring, which, it seemed, the dread alone of his successor's causing confusion in the state prevented him from, he begged leave to remind his Lordship, that there was one great statesman, at least, who had neither forced the cabinet, nor ever scrambled for a place (according to the learned gentleman [the Lord Advocate's] expressions) but who had once already conducted our public affairs with the perfect unanimity of the two Houses of Parliament, as well as with that of the nation at large. That he did not now mean to arraign the conduct of the noble Lord [Lord North] who must, however, allow him to say that his administration had been at least unfortunate. That he and his friends had had the management of the American war for three years; which had produced nothing but a series of disappointments and disasters; plainly shewing them not to be a match for America alone. How then would they resist the power of France, added to that of America? That war, under those circumstances, would be a state of despair. That, therefore, at so alarming and critical a moment as the present, he could not help imploring the interposition of the noble Earl he had alluded to; though he was far from considering him as the only support this country had left; because he knew there were yet those men in it, who, by their known abilities, integrity, and principles of liberty, both deserved and possessed the good opinion and confidence of the public. That the noble Earl, however, was not only looked up to by this country, but was so feared, as well as respected, by every foreign court in Europe, that his very name alone, were he in power, would more contribute to put a stop to the hostile designs of the whole House of Bourbon, than all the mighty preparations we had lately heard so much boasted of; or any, that, he feared, the present condition of this country was able to make. That to expatiate upon that great character would

be needless and superfluous; for, in his opinion, the unanimity we enjoyed at home, as well as the glory we obtained abroad, under that noble Earl's administration, was his best That, as all parties agreed that he had once saved the nation from the disgrace and the ruin of an unsuccessful war, it surely was as reasonable for us to place our confidence in him, in these times of difficulty and danger, as to withhold it from those who had brought us into them.

Lord *Ongley* thought it was improper to say about ministers in the address.

The House divided upon the amendment; for it 113, against it 263.

March 18.

Address presented.

The humble Address of the House of Commons to the King.

Most gracious Sovereign,

WE, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of Great Britain, in Parliament assembled, return our humble thanks to your Majesty, for the communication of the paper presented to the Lord Viscount Weymouth, by order of the French King; and for acquainting us, that, in consequence of this offensive declaration, your Majesty has thought proper to order your ambassador to withdraw from the court of France: and we beg leave to assure your Majesty, that it is with the utmost difficulty we can restrain the strongest expressions of the resentment and indignation which we feel for this unjust and unprovoked aggression on the honour of your Majesty's crown, and the essential interests of your kingdoms, contrary to the law of nations, and injurious to the rights and possessions of every sovereign power in Europe.

The good faith and uprightness of your Majesty's conduct towards foreign powers, and the sincerity of your intentions to preserve the general tranquility, must be acknowledged by all the world: and your Majesty cannot be considered as responsible for the disturbance of this tranquility, if you should find yourself called upon to resist the enterprizes of that restless and dangerous spirit of ambition and aggrandisement, which has so often invaded the rights, and threatened the liberties, of Europe.

We should be wanting in our duty to your Majesty, to our constituents, and to ourselves, if we did not give your Majesty the strongest assurances of our most zealous assistance
and

and support: and we have the firmest confidence, that, in every demonstration of loyalty to your Majesty, and of love of their country, your faithful subjects will vie with each other; and that no considerations will divert or deter them from standing forth in the public defence, and from sustaining, with a steady perseverance, any extraordinary burthens and expences which shall be found necessary, for enabling your Majesty to vindicate the honour of your crown, and to protect the just rights and essential interests of these kingdoms.

The King's Answer.

Gentlemen,

I RETURN you my hearty thanks, for this very dutiful and affectionate address. I make no doubt, that, assisted by the advice of my Parliament, and supported by the spirit of my people, I shall, under the divine Providence, be enabled to repel every insult on the honour of my crown, to maintain the rights of my subjects, and to defend all my dominions.

March 19.

The House in committee on the state of the nation. The subject this day was the expedition from Canada. The Canada papers were read.

Mr. Fox stated the plan of the expedition as wrong and impracticable; not being directed to any point, nor in any sense the right way. Though the minister of the American department [Lord George Germain] might say, and he understood did say, he took the idea and the plan from General Burgoyne; yet he affirmed the contrary. The plan was not General Burgoyne's; it differed from General Burgoyne's; and wherever it did so, it blundered. This expedition was not a plan of diversion in our favour, but a diversion against ourselves, by separating that force which ought to have been united to one point, that of dispersing the rebel army; instead of which, it left General Howe too weak, upon the plan the noble Lord suggested to him; and sent General Burgoyne, with a still lesser army, to a place where the enemy were much stronger. He said this only for argument, to shew that the measure was originally wrong in the design; and added, that he should move something on this point. But the matter upon which he should make his present motion, was that part of the execution which belonged to the minister, not to the officers. The principal and sole design of sending General Burgoyne from Canada,

nada, was that of forcing his way to Albany, and making a junction with General Howe. This was a plan of co-operation, in the execution of which two parties were concerned, but orders were given to only one party; the other party was left ignorant of the design. This appeared from the minister's letters to the commanders, and from the commanders' letters to each other. It was intending two men to meet at one place, but giving orders to only one to go there; and then blaming the execution, because the other, who did not know he was to go there, did not meet him; but who, on the contrary, had acquainted the person with whom the orders lay, that he was going another way. Upon these grounds, he insisted, that the whole disconcertion and failure of General Burgoyne's expedition, was owing to either the ignorance or negligence of the secretary of state who had the direction of it; by which one of his Majesty's armies was totally lost, and in consequence of that, thirteen provinces were lost, to the utter ruin of this country. He moved, that the committee would come to three resolutions, which were, in substance, That the plan of the Canada expedition had been ill concerted; that, from the measures adopted, it was impossible it should succeed; and that the instructions sent to General Howe, to co-operate with General Burgoyne, had not been such as were necessary to insure success to the latter. After which, he said, he should offer another resolution of censure upon the noble Lord [Lord George Germain].

Ld. Nugent. Lord *Nugent* principally spoke to the impropriety of the enquiry into the state of the nation; it now appearing, as he had always foretold it would, to involve in it the case of absent men. As a charge was now brought against a noble Lord, who was secretary of state in the American department, it must now be decided upon; otherwise he should move for the chairman leaving the chair.

Mr. Macdonald. Mr. *Macdonald* said, enough was now brought to shew there was blame somewhere. It was a fact admitted on both sides the House. One side of the House laid the blame on the noble Lord; and that charge he thought must be decided upon. But he begged the committee to recollect, that if it was decided that the blame did not rest upon the noble Lord, a further enquiry remained to be made, who it did rest upon.

Mr. Joliffe. Mr. *Joliffe*. The event of the expedition to Canada, has not only annihilated the idea of the conquest of America, but

but has lost an army of eight thousand men; has cost this country an infinite sum, and the lives of many thousands of its best subjects. It is the blackest page in the English history; it is a disgrace which this nation never can recover. But, dreadful as the consequence of this event is, and may be, much as this country must ever deplore a catastrophe so fatal, and sincerely as I wish the heaviest vengeance to fall on those who merit it, I think it would ill become the candour which ought to distinguish this House, it would even be a subversion of justice, were we to condemn those who concerted the plan, merely because it has not proved successful. The design cannot be judged of by the event. It would be an affront to the understanding of those who hear, it would be an insult to common sense, was I to pretend that I thought the loss of Burgoyne's army was the effect of chance; or that this country would not minutely enquire and resent it. It is impossible to conceive 8000 men reduced to the situation they are, without great fault in some one. It must either rest in those who concerted the plan, in him who had the conduct of it, or in those on whose co-operation success depended. I could have wished that this enquiry had been deferred; for, indisputably, it would be the highest injustice, it would be cruelty in the extreme, to extend your enquiry to the conduct of General Burgoyne. He even knows not of the subject of your deliberations. Whether his rashness precipitated this army into destruction, or whether his delays produced this unhappy surrender, we can come to no resolution. We ought not to suffer ourselves to form an opinion. To censure, or even to question, his conduct, at this time, would be a breach of all the laws of justice, by which, every man ought to be present when he is accused. If, Sir, I am unwilling to condemn, or even to scrutinize, the conduct of General Burgoyne, it becomes me to be no less guarded in what I say of Sir William Howe. Great guilt may rest with him; but there being no paper of importance relative to him before us, except the letter of Lord G. Germain of the 18th of May, we must be silent respecting that great officer, until he returns to England. I shall therefore only submit to you my sentiments on the conduct of the noble Lord at the head of the American department; and I hope to demonstrate, that the loss of this army can no way be attributed to him; that the plan was not only practicable, but that it was necessary for him to adopt it; and that he contributed every thing in his power to ensure success.

At the opening of the campaign, in 1777, the attention of the whole nation was taken up by the intended junction of the armies, and thereby cutting off all communication between the northern and southern provinces. Every one approved the measure. I am warranted, therefore, in saying, that the voice of the whole country concurred with the noble Lord; and had it succeeded, there cannot be a doubt of the most happy consequences to this country. Unless the rebel army could be brought to a general engagement, skirmishes might protract the war, at a vast expence; and though successful, but little forward the conclusion.

The reputation of General Burgoyne, the universal opinion of his skill and bravery, made him appear to the noble Lord, and to the whole world, as the fittest general that could be found for such an expedition. He solicited it by his letter 1st of January, 1777; by No. 9 he states his plan for the campaign. The nation called for it. The General solicited the undertaking; and himself forms the plan. The noble Lord would have deserved every degree of censure, had he impeded, or even if he had not forwarded the attempt. I have no doubt he thought well of it; but had his opinion been contrary, it would be impossible to justify his resisting the calls of his country, and the solicitations of a brave and favourite general. The advantage of crossing the country was obvious; by this means all communications between the northern and southern provinces would have been prevented. Had General Burgoyne received the expected co-operation, the army under General Washington must have been reduced to the necessity of a general engagement. The advantages being infinite, had the event been successful, was not the minister warranted in attempting it? Would he not have been condemnable, if he had adopted any other? I think, Sir, it cannot be controverted; I think the gentlemen on the other side must admit, that the plan of dividing the northern and southern colonies was practicable; that the nation called for it; and that no other plan would have so immediately tended to conclude the war.

Let us now, Sir, enquire, whether the secretary of state complied with the requisitions of the general, and by every means in his power, promoted the success of the undertaking.

No complaint having been made, that every necessary to forward the expedition was not afforded; I might be warranted in concluding that the General was supplied with every thing he could wish. But yet, let us examine that matter.

General

General Burgoyne, by his thoughts on the war, expresses himself thus : I conceive the operating army, exclusive of troops left for the service of Canada, ought not to consist of less than 8000 regulars, rank and file ; the artillery, in the memorandums of General Carleton, a corps of watermen, 2000 Canadians, and a thousand or more savages ; the Canadians and savages were totally out of the power of the secretary of state ; and he could only give direction to Sir Guy Carleton to provide them, if possible. All that was within the immediate power of the secretary of state were the regular troops, and the necessaries of the army. By the letter, 28th March, 1777, from Lord George Germain to Sir Guy Carleton, he is required to put 7173 effective men under the command of General Burgoyne, and 675 under the command of Colonel St. Leger ; making together 7848. It was hardly possible to be nearer the number ; and I defy the most determined persecutor of ministry to say, this event was owing to the want of 150 men.

By the letter from Lord George to Sir William Howe, 18th May, 1777, he has these words : that the King trusts, whatever you meditate may be executed in time to co-operate with the army ordered to proceed from Canada. This is a proof that co-operation was expected by all parties. Could the minister do more ? Will any man conduct your affairs, if he is to be accountable not only for the expediency, but for the success, of every measure ? A general of the greatest military skill, executing a design of his own suggesting, commanding the number of troops he required, supplied with every necessary his imagination could suggest, supported by a co-operation of the armies, so far as the minister is concerned (that must be supposed) could there be a fairer prospect of success ? Could the minister imagine that Sir William Howe would not give his assistance ; or that General Burgoyne, finding himself disappointed in that expectation, would still persist, and not secure a retreat ? The general speaks of his peremptory orders ; they passed through Sir Guy Carleton ; and express, that General Burgoyne and Colonel St. Leger are to be put under the command of Sir William Howe ; and until they receive order from him, they are to act at discretion ; but they are never to lose view of their intended junction with Sir William Howe, as their principal object.

They are to act at their discretion—Is that peremptory ?—
They are to have in view their junction with Sir William
Howe ;

Howe ; but until that junction is established, they continue to act as their discretion dictates. But, Sir, had the orders been the most peremptory that language can convey, they could not have been compulsory, when dangers and difficulties arose which could not be foreseen. Orders are given according to the appearance of things at that time they are issued ; they cease therefore to be peremptory when affairs totally change. No general would undertake an expedition, unless something was left to his discretion. Orders must be conveyed in general terms ; and must be applied according to the intention of those who give them : they can be no otherwise interpreted, than to regulate that which is inconsistent with the general plan, and dangerous in itself, and to adopt such a line of conduct as shall most conduce to the end proposed. What was the end proposed by this expedition ? By crossing the country, to produce a junction of the armies. The general's duty, therefore, was to obtain the end. The mind of man cannot furnish a reasonable ground to conceive that, at all events, however the face of affairs might change, let what difficulties might arise, let a situation be supposed, in which it was impossible for his army to escape being cut to pieces ; yet that he was to proceed at all hazards—Such an interpretation would have destroyed the intent of the expedition ; and it is not possible to imagine, that the general could consider himself bound to obey such orders, though he had received them from the secretary of state. Much more might be said ; but I should precipitate myself into a condemnation of those I do not wish to mention. I am content with having shewn the expediency of the measure is apparent, the practicability of it obvious, and that the secretary of state appears to have done every thing that a minister attentive to the duty of his office was able, to ensure its success. He appears to me, therefore, to merit the hearty thanks of his country.

Mr. Dundas.

Mr. Dundas [Lord Advocate] commented on the papers, with a view to shew, he said, that the plan was a wise one ; that it was attended to in the execution with assiduity and ability ; that it was a plan of junction of co-operation, not a junction of the bodies of the armies ; and that the noble Lord had given orders to every officer to attend to that co-operation.

Sir Richard Sutton.

Sir Richard Sutton thought the papers did not warrant the committee to agree to the proposed resolutions ; and therefore they ought to be thrown out.

Mr.

Mr. *Powys* thought there was an impropriety in the measure, because General Burgoyne was absent. Mr. *Powys*.

Sir *George Howard* was of the same opinion. Sir *George Howard*.

Lord *John Cavendish* said, it would have been better if General Burgoyne was present; but thought there was matter enough in the papers to justify the resolutions. Lord *John Cavendish*.

Mr. *Burke* supported Mr. Fox throughout. Mr. *Burke*.

Lord *North* said it was proper for him to rise, though the charge was not personal against him; yet as nothing was done by the noble Lord, that had not the concurrence of all his Majesty's ministers, he must consider himself as included; and that it was his duty to take his share in the crime, if any such was proved, and in the censure, if any such was passed. He said, all proper orders were given for such co-operation of force, wherever it was employed; all tending to the same end, though not in the same line, nor in lines that communicated with each other. Lord *North*.

Colonel *Barré* observed, the noble Lord had said nothing to the purpose. Those who acknowledge themselves to be accomplices, and were, of course, *particeps criminis*, were the people who took upon themselves to be advocates. Col. *Barré*.

Mr. *Wedderburne* took the same line as the Lord Advocate had done. Mr. *Wedderburne*.

Lord *George Germain* followed Lord North exactly. Ld. *George Germain*.

Mr. *Dunning* said, the noble Lord [Lord George Germain] had promised to send to General Howe the same orders he had given to General Burgoyne. He had neglected to do it. He positively asserted his Lordship never did send them. Mr. *Dunning*.

Mr. *Thurlow* said, he got up to exculpate Lord Weymouth from the share he had, as one of the King's ministers. Mr. *Thurlow*.

Mr. *Fox* replied, that though that noble Lord was his particular friend, yet he thought his criminality was of another kind. His Lordship's ignorance of the treaty between France and America, deserved a censure of a much higher nature. Mr. *Fox*.

The question was called for, and the House divided; for the resolutions 44, against them 164.

Mr. *Fox*, in great warmth, declared he would not make another motion; and taking the resolution of censure out of his pocket, tore it in pieces, and then went out of the House. Mr. *Fox*.

As soon as Mr. Fox was gone, Mr. *Wedderburne* moved, That it does not appear to this committee, that the failure of the

the expedition from Canada arose from any neglect in the secretary of state.

This resolution was agreed to in the committee; but was never reported to the House.

Adjourned to the 23d.

March 23.

Sir *Grey Cooper* presented to the House the following paper.

ARTICLES of AGREEMENT, indented, had, made, and concluded, this 20th Day of December, in the 11th year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Third, by the grace of God King of Great Britain, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, and so forth, and in the year of our Lord 1770; between the Lords Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury, for and on the part and behalf of his Majesty on the one part, and the Right Honourable Thomas Harley, and Henry Drummond, Esquire, of the other part.

WHEREAS, upon the 29th day of November, 1768, a contract was made between the then Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury, and the said Thomas Harley and John Drummond, Esquires, for providing sufficient quantities of money for the subsistence of his Majesty's forces in North-America. And whereas the said John Drummond hath desired, in writing, to be immediately discharged from the further service and execution of the said contract, without further notice; and the said Lords Commissioners having, on his Majesty's part, agreed to accept of the said resignation: it is therefore thought necessary, for the service of the public, that a new contract should be entered into with some able and fit persons for performing the said service. And whereas the said Thomas Harley and Henry Drummond are willing and desirous to take and receive all such sums of money as shall from time to time be issued or wanted for the purposes aforesaid; and invert the same in purchasing Spanish milled dollars, and other Spanish coined silver, and Spanish or Portugal coined gold, either in England or the colonies, as they shall find such silver and gold may be purchased on the most advantageous terms for the service of the public; and to pay over such monies in New-York, Nova Scotia, Louisbourg, Quebec, and Montreal, as the same shall be wanted for the services of the said forces, and purposes aforesaid.

They

They the said Thomas Harley and Henry Drummond rendering particular and clear accounts, as well of all the profits that may arise by their transactions, as also of all costs and charges attending the same; for all which services and their labour and pains therein, they are to have and receive a clear allowance of one and a half per cent. This indenture therefore witnesseth, and it is hereby covenanted and agreed, by and between the said Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury on the part and behalf of his Majesty, and the said Thomas Harley and Henry Drummond, in manner and form following: that is to say,

They the said Thomas Harley and Henry Drummond, for themselves, and their heirs, executors, and administrators, do severally covenant, contract and agree, to and with the said Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury, that they the said Thomas Harley and Henry Drummond, will take and receive all such sum and sums of money as shall from time be issued for the pay and service of his Majesty's troops and forces in America; and shall immediately, upon such issues, invert the same, in the purchasing, either in England or in the colonies, as may be found most for the advantage of the public, Spanish milled dollars, and other Spanish coined silver, and Spanish and Portugal coined gold; and will (unavoidable accidents only excepted) pay over and deliver such monies to the respective paymasters, who are or shall be appointed to receive the same in New-York, Nova Scotia, Louisburgh, Quebec, and Montreal, or in such other places in North-America where his Majesty's services require that a paymaster be appointed. For which said monies, the said paymasters are from time to time to give the said contractors proper receipts and acquittances.

And the said Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury, for and on the part of his Majesty, do hereby agree, to and with the said Thomas Harley and Henry Drummond, their heirs, executors, and administrators, that they shall be allowed all costs and charges that shall attend the inverting the monies so to be issued to them into such coined silver and gold coin, and the delivering the same to the said paymasters of the said forces, either in New-York, Nova Scotia, Louisburgh, Quebec, or Montreal, or other places as aforesaid.

And the said Thomas Harley and Henry Drummond, for themselves, their heirs, executors, and administrators, do hereby further covenant and agree, that they will fairly and faithfully account for, and duly answer to his Majesty, all

profits and advantages which shall or may arise by and upon the monies to be inverted in manner aforesaid. And the said Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury do agree, that the said Thomas Harley and Henry Drummond, their heirs, executors, administrators, or assigns, shall be allowed, have, and receive, for their labour, pains, and services, in receiving all such monies, and inverting and paying over the same, a full and clear allowance of one and a half per centum.

And it is hereby agreed, that sufficient security, to the good liking of the said Commissioners, shall be given by the said Thomas Harley and Henry Drummond, for the due performance of the several articles of this indenture, on their parts to be done and performed, before they shall enter upon the execution thereof.

And it is hereby declared and agreed, by and between the several parties hereto, that this contract shall commence from the day of the date hereof, and continue for one whole year certain, and from thenceforth until the end of twelve calendar months after warning shall have been given, either on his Majesty's part, or by the said Thomas Harley and Henry Drummond, their heirs, executors, administrators, or assigns.

Lastly, it is covenanted and agreed, between all the parties to these presents, that the Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury, or any of them, shall not be liable, in their persons or estates, to any action of covenant, or any other proceedings whatsoever, in any court of law or equity, by reason or means of their being on his Majesty's behalf made parties to this contract.

In witness whereof, the said Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury, and the said Thomas Harley and Henry Drummond, have hereunto interchangeably put their hands and seals.

Signed,

NORTH.

G. ONSLOW.

C. JENKINSON.

J. DYSON.

C. TOWNSHEND.

Lord North.

Lord North acquainted the House, that he had a message from his Majesty to the House, signed by his Majesty; and he presented the same to the House; and it was read by Mr. Speaker, and is as followeth, viz.

GEORGE R.

THE French King having concluded a treaty of amity and commerce with his Majesty's revolted subjects in North-America,

America, and his Majesty having received advice, that the warlike preparations in France become every day more considerable; his Majesty thinks that, in this critical conjuncture, he should not act consistently with the care and concern, which he always feels for his faithful people, if he omitted any means in his power that may contribute to their defence: therefore, in pursuance of the acts of parliament, enabling his Majesty to call out and assemble the militia, in the cases therein mentioned, his Majesty has thought it right to make this communication to the House of Commons; to the end that his Majesty may, if he shall think proper, cause the militia to be drawn out and embodied, and to march as occasion shall require.

G. R.

Resolved, *nemine contradicente*,

That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, to return his Majesty the humble thanks of this House, for his most gracious message; and to express the just sense we have of his Majesty's goodness, and of his paternal care of his people, in providing every means in his power that may tend to their defence, and in his intention to call out and assemble the militia, if it shall be found necessary for that purpose.

Lord *North* moved to bring in a bill to continue an act of the 16th of his present Majesty, for employing convicts on the river Thames.

Mr. *Burke* feared the time would come when we should put prisoners and felons to death on the principle of oeconomy.

Sir *William Meredith* disapproved of the mode of punishment; said it was much more severe than transportation, and totally repugnant to the general frame of our laws.

Mr. *T. Townshend* said the act had not the desired effect, for robberies were encreased instead of being diminished; that in the course of the winter every day furnished some fresh account of some daring robbery or burglary. He said, scarce a night passed in which there were not robberies committed in Park-lane, and firing of pistols heard.

Mr. *Gascoigne* said, he had been to see the convicts at work; that their punishment was far from severe; that though it was called hard labour, they do not do as much work in a day as may be done for hire for ninepence.

Mr. *Gilbert* said, the act was meant as a temporary law, and as such he was for continuing it, till something else was substituted in its place.

Sir *Charles Bunbury* said, that we still possessed several places in America, to which felons could be transported.

M 2

Mr.

Mr. F. Montagu. Mr. *F. Montagu* was for sending the bill to a committee. He said, he expected a bill upon a much larger plan; but in the mean time, if that should not be practicable, he thought the present act ought to be continued.

Mr. Burke. Mr. *Burke* said, the felons ought to be transported to Canada, Nova Scotia, and the Floridas.

Sir Richard Sutton. Sir *Richard Sutton* moved for a committee to enquire into the state of the prisoners, and to report the same to the House. The other motion was withdrawn.

Col. Barré. Colonel *Barré* gave notice that he would make a motion on Friday next (the 27th) respecting the expenditure of the public money.

Lord North. Lord *North* observed, that the motion would lead to a large field, and if the gentleman would not declare to what particular parts of the expenditure his motion was meant to be directed, it would be impossible for him to rely on his bare memory, so as to be able to give the House a clear and satisfactory account.

Col. Barré. Colonel *Barré* said he did not mean to take the noble Lord by surprize, nor was his motion a captious one. He would ask no questions but what might be easily answered.

Ld. George Cavendish. Lord *George Cavendish* remarked, that he never remembered it to be customary to give the House a bill of fare on notice of a motion.

March 24.

No debate.

March 25.

The House in committee of supply.

Lord *North* moved, that 1,406,923*l.* be granted to his majesty, to defray the extra expences of his majesty's land forces.

That 18,895*l.* be granted for the charge of the augmentation to his majesty's forces.

That 6998*l.* be granted for the expences of roads and bridges in Scotland.

March 26.

Lord North. Lord *North* presented the bill for laying a tax upon houses, and moved, that the second reading be on Monday next, the 30th.

Sir George Yonge. Sir *George Yonge* wished the second reading deferred to a more distant day, as he took it to be a matter of very great consequence to the inhabitants of the cities of London and Westminster, and parts adjacent, in one point of view; and to the whole landed interest of England and Wales in another. He said, the noble Lord's attempt to hurry it through the House wore a very suspicious appearance; that certainly it

it was one of the most oppressive and injurious taxes that was ever devised; and resembled more a law of punishment upon the metropolis, than a fair, equal, and proportionate tax upon property. He doubted not but the citizens of London, &c. would, if they had due notice, petition that House against it; and this was the means taken to steal a march upon the persons to be affected by the bill, and carry it through the House by surprise. He said, the chancellor of the exchequer had acquainted the committee, when the tax was first proposed, that farm houses were to be exempted. He begged to know from the noble Lord, if provision had been made in the bill for that purpose?

Mr. *Byng*, after condemning the bill, in strong terms, said, the noble Lord had given the committee likewise to understand, that mansions would be exempted, because, if they were not, the tax would operate to all intents and purposes as a land-tax: yet, if this iniquitous tax must pass, he would be against the exemption; because then the people without doors would have just reason to say, the individuals composing that House had taxed every one but themselves.

Lord *North* replied to the first speaker, that farm houses of certain denominations might be exempted; but he never entertained a single idea of not taxing mansions; but in the committee (the principle of the bill being clearly out of the question) would be the proper place to settle those matters.

Mr. *Burke* moved to have the bill printed, that those who were to bear nine tenths of the burden, which it intended to impose, might be timely informed of its contents. He called it a bill of punishment on the citizens of London, &c. for their daring to disapprove of the American war.

Hon. *T. Walpole* said, it was a melancholy consideration, that those and their posterity who, within and without that House, disapproved and reprobated the American war, should have their inheritances and properties mortgaged for the enormous sums spent and lavished in endeavouring to effect systems equally fraught with folly, cruelty, and injustice. He said, the noble Lord in the blue ribbon could not, without manifesting the highest contempt for the inhabitants of this great metropolis, refuse to consent to the printing of the bill. His worthy relation (the late Sir Robert Walpole) who, without any disparagement to his Lordship, was his equal in the science of politics, upon a false alarm, acted in the manner now recommended, on his own account. A great alarm, such as that against the present bill, was raised in the year 1733 against the excise scheme. A false bill was printed and circulated through the country. The minister moved to have one

one printed by the order of the House, by which means the counterfeit was detected, and the clamour in a great measure instantly subsided.

Mr. Rigby. Mr. *Rigby* opposed the printing of the bill, as unprecedented in respect of a money bill. It was an established rule, he said, never to print them; and if the present bill should be printed, what end would it answer? for it was likewise another established rule, never to receive a petition against a money bill.

The question was then put, and the division was; for printing 44; against it 71.

Mr. Gascoigne. Mr. *Gascoigne* (Sir Charles Whitworth being indisposed) brought up the report of the resolutions agreed to in the committee of supply.

Mr. Rigby. Mr. *Rigby* said, he had, since the preceding day, made particular enquiry into the matter respecting the stoppages of the armies serving in America, and had found, that the same had been issued by the deputy paymaster-general, by orders from the commander in chief, by warrants for that purpose. He then read, from papers, the orders from Sir William Howe, directing to pay so much, and to stop so much, on account of so many rations of provisions. He professed his ignorance of the particular grounds of those orders—Those lay with the general to explain, who he doubted not would do so very satisfactorily in due time. This could not be done, however, till next year, when the whole would be cleared up to the satisfaction of the House.

Lord North. Lord *North* said, that every thing upon future examination would appear clear and satisfactory; that the rations were distributed; and where they were not, there the stoppages accrued. That the stoppages were made on the effective men, and non-commissioned officers; and, consequently, though the numbers might be considerably less, the effectives, and the number of rations distributed, might easily account for the difference.

Mr. Baker. Mr. *Baker* was severe on the contractors, for providing the gold coin. He said, the commission was exorbitant, and unprecedented. But supposing that one one-half *per cent.* might be reasonable for the Spanish and Portugal coins, which he was sure it was not, what would the nation think of ministers, who could with such a wanton hand, enough to create the most unfavourable suspicions, give a commission of one one-half *per cent.* on English gold sent to America, and bills drawn on this country by the commander in chief. He insisted that half *per cent.* was full enough, and was the current price for which acceptances were done by every merchant in

in the city of London, and that too on small sums, where there was more trouble in accepting and paying five thousand pounds, than what fell to the share of the contractors in accepting and paying a million. He spoke of the 300,000 guineas sent to America, and observed, on that article alone, the contractors made only the trifling sum of four thousand seven hundred and twenty-five pounds.

Mr. *Burke* moved an amendment, to except out of the resolution the sum of 160,000*l.* His reason for doing so was, that he hoped an English house of commons would never consent to pay this sum, which he said had been advanced to purchase hatchets, tomahawks, scalping-knives, razors, spurs, &c. for the savages of America, to butcher, torture, scalp, and massacre old men, women, children, and infants at the breast.

On the question the amendment was rejected; 21 for it, and 56 against it.

March 27,

No debate.

Adjourned to the 30th.

March 30.

House-tax bill read a second time. No debate upon it.

Colonel *Barré*. He began with observing the enormous sums which had been granted for army extraordinaries for the three last years, and how shamefully they had been squandered. He read, from papers on the table, the sums granted; the detail of each year's expenditure; the particular services; and the persons who had performed the contracts. He said, when the first extraordinaries of 800,000*l.* came before that House, in the year 1776, he endeavoured to get explanations. The answer was, We have no vouchers; those cannot be had till the next year. We have as yet procured no more than an account of the sums issued, to whom issued, and the services for which they were issued. All these are not vouchers to the House; the vouchers shewing in what manner the money thus issued has been expended will come the next year. So it happened, he said, the following, and so it has happened this year. This House has each successive year been told, that they are to have the vouchers of the preceding; none have been as yet produced; but the noble Lord, after his repeated and solemn promises, has thought proper to keep the parliament and nation in the dark. The same confidence, he might call it shameful confidence, and delusion on one side, and the same shameful and traiterous servility on the other.

He

He said, it was not even the money that was thrown away—but that *that* was permitted to lie in the hands of favourite placemen, favourite agents, and favourite contractors. In some instances, this money was permitted to lie in the hands of men, answering to those several descriptions, for fifteen or twenty years, while this ruined, distressed nation, was borrowing money at upwards of five *per cent.* He remarked, that a thousand lame apologies were made day after day; such as that there were not clerks enough in the auditor's office. Why not have clerks enough? Such again was the shameful pretence in the navy-office, that they could not undertake the hiring the transport victuallers. Why not employ additional clerks, surveyors, &c. But these were mere flimsy pretexts, to blindfold the nation, and prevent them from discovering the iniquitous jobs that were daily carrying into execution. If clerks, surveyors, and commissioners were wanting, and that the precious agent and contractor, Mr. Atkinson, was able to supply them all, in his own person (that, for aught that appeared, being the case), why not employ this worthy gentleman to audit the accounts? He next turned his attention to Mr. Gordon, the inspector of provisions at Corke, who had only at the rate of upwards of ten thousand pounds a year for his trouble, for what might be as well, he would not say better, executed for half so many hundreds. But he was apt to suspect, that poor Mr. Gordon had not all the profit set up to his account.

The colonel next proceeded to state the expences of the respective years of the late glorious war, and compare them with the first, second, and third years of the present disgraceful, ruinous, and inglorious war; and proved fairly, that when we had more than half of Europe to contend with, our expences were not near so great. Where was the balance? What our conquests? Where were our prizes? Where were our victories? We had been beaten, defeated, or baffled, in every attempt. We had spent, or would spend, by the close of the present campaign, upwards of thirty millions of money; and, to fill the measure of national calamity, we were on the eve of a war with France and Spain, as well as America. Here he took a more particular view of agents, contractors, splitting of profits, &c. particularly of the contracts and agencies of Harley and Drummond, on the Spanish, Portugal, and British gold coin; and the self-denying Mr. Atkinson, relative to his rum contract, and agency for the line of transports for the treasury. He contended, that the rum contract was full fifty *per cent.* too much

much; that the transport service, including the commission, was a loss of twenty *per cent.* to the public; and that the contract for remitting money, and accepting bills given to Harley and Drummond, would be a waste of public money, little short of 30,000*l.* He said, the rum contract had been referred to three merchants of the first reputation in the city, by the treasury; the result of which was, that after the merchants had made the most ample allowance, there remained an excess of profit or *douceur*, for somebody, of full thirty *per cent.* He supposed, a reasonable share to the contractor for his trouble and risque. He said, it was well known that the price of rum in the island is seldom more than twenty, or twenty-one pence the gallon; that 5*d.* for profit and freight is a great allowance; but did not wonder that great sums had been devoured by contracts, when the noble Lord in the blue ribbon was so criminally ignorant as not to know currency from sterling. But surely, if the noble Lord was ignorant of the difference, was it not culpable in him and his colleagues at the treasury-board not to enquire of some person who was capable of informing them on the subject?

Lord *North* rose in great warmth. He said, he was pretty sure it was sterling; but gentlemen cried no; and he, to humour them, acquiesced, though afterwards, upon enquiry, it proved to be sterling, and that he was right. Lord *North*.

Colonel *Barré* reprehended the noble Lord severely for his disorder, in a strain of irony. The noble Lord, says he, seems to be in a passion. I am not surpris'd at it. I should be surpris'd if he did not feel; but only mark his Lordship's philosophic command of temper, he has not been the least disorderly in interrupting me; not in the least disorderly, to be sure. Col. *Barré*.

Lord *North* rose again, and was proceeding in a high tone, when he was called to order. Continuing still on his legs, the cry of chair! chair! succeeded. The Speaker told his Lordship, that the proper time to reply to the honourable gentleman, who was opening the grounds of his motion, would be when he had sat down.

Colonel *Barré* was still proceeding; and for nearly a quarter of an hour it was with great difficulty that the resentment of the noble Lord could be repressed. At length, however, the peremptory orders of the chair prevailed, and his Lordship sat down.

Colonel *Barré* resumed the thread of his discourse. He said, the motions he meant to propose might seem rather new, because not lately practis'd; but there were nevertheless se-

veral precedents in the journals in their support, particularly in the years 1653 and 1667; and in the years 1694 and 1697, as well as several others.

He next observed on several other parts of the account. He said, there was the sum of five thousand pounds paid to Sir Thomas Mills for an office enjoyed in Quebec some years since. He could not possibly see how this sum happened not to be paid before. He said, twenty-three thousand pounds were charged for carrying on war against the Caribbs. He had enquired of several gentlemen, within and without doors, who have property in the island of St. Vincents, who answered, they heard nothing of any war existing in that island since the last troubles. He said, in Messrs. Harley and Drummond's account, there appeared a want of vouchers for eighty thousand pounds. That there was a charge of one hundred and eight thousand pounds for sheep, and for cabbages, and other vegetables, exclusive of another monstrous charge for four crout; besides the enormous sum of forty thousand pounds paid to Lord Cornwallis without account.

He said, that the last war in America, commissioners had ten pounds a day; but now they were paid at the rate of an hundred pounds a day. Said, that America, perceiving our luxury, dissipation, and extravagance; and seeing us immersed in corruption, resolved to separate from us; and he was well assured, that that was one of the great motives for her erecting herself into a separate and independent state. His reflections were very severe upon ministry in general, and pointedly so upon Lord North. The colonel painted in the strongest colours, our gloomy prospect; said that Bristol had already felt the fatal effects of this war; that Liverpool had done the same; and that London itself was so oppressed with the misfortunes of it, that she had not courage even to complain. He quoted Reynell, that if the English ever have their manners so corrupted, and their principles of liberty so changed, as to attempt to put fetters upon the colonies, they will soon become slaves themselves; that all Europe used to look upon England as her pride, but that she now turned from her, and cherished that pride in the West, that phoenix rising out of our ashes.

He observed, that the noble Lord had the drum beat in that House, and the standard of war hoisted against America; and looked upon none as his friends but such as enlisted on the terms of compelling America, by the point of the sword, to a surrender of her liberties. The noble Lord's power was

great, and his means of preservation greater; but they all proved too weak for that resistance which a spirit of freedom, and legal and constitutional liberty, inspired.

He concluded, by strongly recommending public œconomy; that dislevered as the empire was, we had no right to the expensive pomp belonging to a great state; that we were become a little one; that we should œconomise the little we had left; but that the very men, who had brought us to this situation, would probably that very night reject the means of doing it.

He then moved his resolutions, which substantially imported, that a committee be appointed to inspect the public accounts, and to report their opinion thereon to the House.

Lord *North* said, he was still right; for it was not currency, but sterling. If he had been ignorant of that circumstance, he did not expect to hear it imputed to him as a crime. He said, if governors abroad drew bills on the treasury, how could it be helped? They had no money there, and money must be expended in building barracks, forts, &c. and in raising defences within their respective governments. They must account for what they had drawn; and though they had over-drawn, the present was rather too delicate a time to protest their bills. Lord *North*.

He said, he had no objection to the proposed committee, but should wish not to have it above stairs; because he could not attend there, on account of public business; but if in the House, could and would attend, and should wish to know before-hand, to what heads of expenditure the honourable gentleman meant chiefly to direct the enquiry, that he might be enabled to give a proper answer.

Mr. *Cornwall* said, the estimates were formed above an hundred years ago, and that all the materials used in ship-building, repairs, stores, &c. are increased treble in the value. This circumstance, he said, would fully account for the extra's, and the great increase of the navy debt. He said, accounts were confused things to look into; but the treasury had done every thing that could possibly have depended upon them, to inspect and regulate them. He said, since ever he sat at the treasury-board, he disliked governor's accounts; but what could be done? Here he copied, *verbatim*, the argument of the noble Lord who spoke before him. He said, he thought it extremely improper to refer the rum contract to the merchants, without telling them the real price of the rum; instead of which, they fixed an arbitrary value on it, much below the real price, which was the reason Mr. *Cornwall*.

that all their deductions were wrong. He added, that public affairs could not be transacted with more care and attention than they were at present; that therefore he could not see the least occasion for adopting the method proposed by the honourable gentleman; particularly as the contractors would refund to the treasury what they had taken beyond a fair price, and that the treasury would look to that and receive it accordingly; that the nation was not, at present, in a proper temper; and that this would only add to the calumnies and detraction spirit of the day.

Governor
Johnstone.

Governor *Johnstone* observed, that the very reasons assigned by the honourable gentleman who spoke last, were the strongest that could be possibly given in favour of the enquiry into the public accounts; because he had acknowledged that the accounts were intricate, and difficult to liquidate. He said, the treasury had been greatly imposed on in the rum contract, and he believed knowingly so; for if they had done their duty, to make enquiry, they would have found that the current price of proof rum in the islands is 1s. 11d. and 4d. or 5d. at most, was fully sufficient for freight, leakage, &c. and was what any fair trader, or honest man, would be fully content with. He ridiculed Lord North's self-sufficiency, as he called it, in objecting to its being a secret committee, laying so much stress upon his own presence being essential to the carrying on the business in it; said that for his part, were he to judge of the effect the noble Lord's presence would have upon any future business, by what it had had upon all past, he should wish his absence from the committee; that certainly the situation of the affairs his Lordship has hitherto had the immediate management of, was, he thought, but little inducement for the House to give much weight to the objection made by him to the secret committee.

Mr. *Aubrey.*

Mr. *Aubrey* thanked the honourable gentleman who made the motion, to whom he was sure the House in general, and every country gentleman in particular, was so much obliged; that the papers on the table abounded with such instances of extravagance, that it plainly appeared there was no other possible method of checking the careless profusion of ministers, but the one moved for; that not to comply with the proposed enquiry, would be a breach of the trust reposed in us by our constituents; that if it was put off, not only the present ministers, but all future ones, would regard it as a declaration, that impunity is a confirmed privilege of office; and that the rapacious contractor would receive it as a license for plunder; that the valour of our officers and soldiers could
not

not alone save the country ; that there must be a strict attention to the finances, and application of public money ; that without this, even another Marlborough or another Wolfe would not avail us ; to use the words of one who was a great statesman, as well as a great poet,

In vain doth valour bleed,

While av'rice and rapine share the land.

Mr. *Jenkinson* said, he was for the motion in part, but he was against the opinions of the committee being reported ; that upon condition that the motion was amended according to that idea, he should vote for the select committee. He said, he knew the treasury-board was always very exact in making enquiries before it entered into any contract ; and made no doubt but the board had been equally circumspect on the present occasion. He said, he did not think this a proper time for the committee of accounts. The House was not in a temper to go into such a tedious, difficult examination, and it might be productive of great mischief, by disseminating ill-founded charges, calumnies, &c.

Mr. *Burke* replied, that to appoint the committee would be the best means of preventing calumnies, and of refuting ill-founded reports. The calumnies, if they deserved that appellation, were already spread ; enquiry, leading to a disclosure of truth, was the surest way to detect falsehood. If I had to do with a man (says he) who suspected me, and that I was conscious of my own innocence, I would desire, I would intreat ; and, if I could not otherwise persuade him to do me justice, I would, if in my power, compel him to examine into my conduct or accounts. He said, he differed in sentiment, as to the opinions not being reported from the committee, with the facts, but he did not afterwards insist upon his objection ; said, that he could not see the great necessity there would be, for the noble Lord's [Lord North] being present at the committee, or even particular use there would be in it, unless to brow-beat some, and support prevarication in others.

Lord *North* said, he would repeat again, he had no objection to a committee, but not up stairs ; or if the House liked a select committee better, he would be perfectly content.

Mr. *Harley* said, that the part of the public accounts relative to him, would take up but very little of their time.

Mr. Alderman *Bull*. It is seldom, and for a few minutes only, that I ever venture to beg the attention of the house ; but, Sir, I think it a duty I owe to my constituents and to my country, to declare my opinion upon points, in which I esteem

esteem this House to be in a peculiar manner the guardians, and the representatives of the people at large.

What I have in view has some relation to the motion before you ; the facts I shall mention are well known, though I think they have not been duly attended to. Sir, during the late peace, administration paid off eleven millions of the national debt ; the public, however, did not, nor could they perceive any advantage they gained by this reduction of the debt, the taxes continuing the same, until they were told, that if we should be again involved in a war, they would then be able to borrow the amount of the sum paid off, without laying fresh burdens upon the people. Sir, we have had a war, and how have these ministerial assurances turned out ? Instead of fact, they were all delusion. The first moment supplies were required, new taxes were proposed. Two millions one hundred and fifty thousand pounds were funded the year before the last ; for this small sum (compared with eleven million) fresh taxes were levied upon the people. The last year five millions were funded, and proportionable taxes were imposed. Part of the additional load of the present year, our task-masters have indulged us with the knowledge of. I should not have troubled the House with these observations, if any gentleman had noticed them before.

Sir, I cannot rise in this House, without adding a word upon the subject of the present unhappy war. My opinion has ever been the same ; I think it founded in injustice, and executed in inhumanity. I hope the people will be roused to a contemplation of the perilous state in which they now are : there may not be a week between us and total ruin. We have lost America ; our madness has driven her to independency ; and that independency, in defiance of our resolves, I am confident she will support. Besides this, we have to lament, and ministers to answer for, the loss of many thousands of valuable lives, and many millions of money, which no success in such an iniquitous war can ever repay. These, Sir, are some of the fatal effects of the wisdom of the present ministers. Delusion has succeeded delusion, and disgrace has succeeded disgrace, till little remains to be added to the catalogue of our calamities.

The honourable gentleman that made the motion has said, that the citizens of London are now so depressed, that they hardly dare complain ; yet, Sir, though a citizen of London, I dare to give my opinion in this House, and in the hearing of certain noble Lords. This opinion I have long held, and which I am more and more confirmed by every day's experience.

rience. I am the more ready to declare this opinion, because I do most firmly believe it to be the opinion, not only of the minority, but the majority of this House also. I mean, Sir, that the great objects of the present administration, their aiders and abettors, are, and ever have been, to aggrandize and to enrich themselves; to plunder, to impoverish, and to enslave the people.

Col. *Barré's* motion having been amended by Mr. Corn- Col. *Barré*, wall, by leaving out the words, "to report their opinion thereon," the Colonel said, that from the select committee in 1773, much was expected, and little came forth; that he should wish to withdraw his motion, rather than hang out to the public hopes of redress, and that something would be done, and afterwards disappoint the public expectation, by being able to effect nothing, as the matter was to be decided in the House, where the parties concerned were certain of a majority.

Mr. *Stanley* said, he did not approve of the committee, be- Mr. *Stanley*, cause it implied a censure without a tittle of proof, that that censure was well founded. He said, he had been upon the India committee.

Mr. *Bayley* repeated what he had often said respecting the Mr. *Bayley*, rum contracts; that is, that he had offered ministers better, or at least as good, rum, for half the price they had charged to the public.

Sir *George Yonge*, for the committee, said, that the papers Sir *George Yonge*, on the table contained the charge, and that it was incumbent on those it might be supposed to affect, to endeavour to refute it.

A select committee was then moved and agreed to. Question moved to choose by ballot in the manner of striking a select committee, in the case of controverted elections. Agreed to.

A petition of the free burghesses, freeholders, and inhabitants, of the town and county of Newcastle upon Tyne, was presented to the House, and read; setting forth, that, Deeply affected with the present public distress, and apprehensive of the imminent danger if not total ruin of our political constitution, we look up to you, as the only proper guardians of those rights and privileges, which we have committed in trust to your defence and protection. We have long beheld, with concern, the growing incroachments of ministerial power, and that power and influence given to interested men, whose avowed principles are diametrically opposite to the spirit

rit of our excellent constitution, which accomplished the exclusion of tyranny, by the late glorious revolution, and the subsequent elevation of our present most gracious Sovereign's illustrious family to the throne of these realms. After a long train of unredressed increasing evils, we find ourselves involved in an unnecessary, expensive, and ruinous civil war; many thousands of our brave countrymen have been lost; many millions of the public treasure expended; our taxes daily increasing; our trade and commerce declining; many of our resources cut off; our national credit sinking; and all (without the least prospect of public advantage) persisted in by our ministers against the most humble petitions and just remonstrances, until repeated ill success, and the prospect of a foreign war, have at length convinced them of their error and misconduct, and compelled them inconsistently to solicit (probably too late) for those terms which reason and truth had long ago sued for in vain; we therefore pray, that the wisdom and attention of Parliament may be seriously engaged to investigate, and effectually root out, the cause of these evils, to establish the peace and happiness of society, by humbly addressing his Majesty to remove from his presence and councils for ever those men, who from motives of interest, or vindictive ambition, may have destroyed this peace, interrupted this happiness, and forfeited the confidence of the people; and, to prevent succeeding delinquents from being misled by the flattering hopes of impunity, we pray, that legal but rigorous and exemplary punishments may be impartially inflicted upon any who are found to have betrayed the just rights, and sacrificed the welfare, of their country; that such effectual check may be given to vice and corruption, and such countenance and encouragement to public virtue, as may unite a free and generous people upon the solid basis of loyalty and mutual affection, and enable us, with that prevalent assistance which depends upon the Divine Approbation, to escape the wiles, and repel the assaults, of our natural, insidious, and powerful enemies.

Ordered,

That the said petition do lie upon the table.

March 31.

No debate.

April 1.

Private business.

The following is a list of the select committee appointed to inspect into the expenditure of money, &c. upon Col. Barré's motion:

Sir

Col. Barré,
 Sir Edward Aftley,
 Mr. Ellis,
 Mr. Hatton,
 Mr. C. Mellish,
 Mr. D'Oyley,
 Mr. Grosvenor,
 Mr. Medley,
 Mr. Norton,
 Lord Parker,
 Sir Robert Sutton.

Sir William Baggot,
 Lord John Cavendish,
 Sir G. Elliot,
 Mr. Macdonald,
 Mr. Brereton,
 Mr. Elwes,
 Mr. Jenkinson,
 Mr. F. Montagu,
 Mr. Oliver,
 Mr. Stanley,

April 2.

Lord *Nugent* moved, that a committee of the whole House Lord Nugent.
 be appointed to consider of the trade of Ireland. His Lordship observed, that the conduct of Great Britain towards its sister kingdom had been no less impolitic than unjust, and that the present situation of public affairs called particularly on this country to enter into a revision of the Irish trade laws.

Mr. *Burke* spoke to the same purport; said, Ireland was Mr. Burke.
 now the chief dependency of the British crown, and that it particularly behoved this country to admit the Irish nation to the privileges of British citizens.

Mr. *Baker* said, the restrictions on the Irish trade defeated Mr. Baker.
 themselves, and, instead of promoting the staple manufactory of this country, that of woollens, had the direct contrary effect, by furnishing the French with raw materials, which enabled them to rival and undersell us at all the markets in Europe.

Sir *William Meredith* confirmed what Mr. Baker had said; Sir William Meredith.
 observing, that the Irish, in order to pay the enhanced value of lands, were obliged to carry their wool to France, where it brought a most exorbitant price.

Mr. *Byng* said, he hoped the narrow policy which induced Mr. Byng.
 this country to prevent the people of Ireland from manufacturing their native produce, was at an end. He trusted, therefore, that the House would come to the business with one heart, and a spirit of unanimity.

Question put on Lord Nugent's motion, and agreed to nem. con.

Mr. *Powys* then rose, and observed, that a right hon. gen- Mr. Powys.
 tleman [Sir William Meredith] had given notice some days since, that he would make a motion, for leave to bring in a bill for repealing certain laws relative to America; that he and several gentlemen daily attended in expectation of such motion, but the right honourable gentleman hath hitherto

forborne to give any intimation to the House, one way or the other, whether he had dropt all further thoughts of it, or had determined to make it on a particular day.

Sir William
Meredith.

Sir *William Meredith* said, he was obliged to the honourable gentleman for thinking any thing he could offer was worthy the attention of the House; said, he intended to have made his motion day after day, but other business and late Houses constantly intervened to prevent him; besides, part of the time he was much indisposed; but now, that he was nearly recovered from his late illness, he would, with the approbation of the House, make it on Monday next. Monday was accordingly fixed upon.

The
Speaker.

The *Speaker* then called upon Mr. Wilkes, to make his promised motion relative to aids and benevolences. He said, the reason he particularly called on the honourable gentleman was, because he understood he had a motion to make, and then, and not till then, there would be a question before the House to debate on. At present there was none. But if gentlemen will continue to converse when notice of a motion is known, he begged the House would revert back to the old rule, and not give any previous intimation, but accompany the notice with the motion itself.

Sir Philip
Fennings
Clerke.

Sir *Philip Fennings Clerke* gave notice, that he would on Thursday move for leave to bring in a bill for disabling contractors, or persons sharing any part of the profits arising from contracts, from sitting in that House.

Mr. Alder-
man Wilkes.

Mr. Alderman *Wilkes*. In this free country, where the people have so considerable a share in the legislature, I hold it to be the duty of every man to watch over the constitution. The members of this House are more particularly delegated to a charge of this moment and importance. Any wilful negligence or inattention in us would be a breach of trust, and highly criminal. In this thorough conviction, I shall take the liberty of submitting to your consideration some late proceedings, because I am convinced they are, although countenanced by the highest authority, directly repugnant to the genius of our laws and government. The late encroachments on the constitution by the executive power of the state have neither been gradual nor inconsiderable.

Among the great outlines of this well-poized constitution, I believe it will be acknowledged, that one of the most striking is, the power assumed and regularly exercised by this House, of granting the money of the people, which creates the dependence of the Crown on Parliament for supplies. The purse of the nation has been subject only to the con-
troul

troul of this branch of the legislature. So that a jealousy has prevailed on this occasion, that the other House have never been suffered to make the least alteration in a bill, which could in any way be construed to be a money bill, even by a fine or penalty in an enacting clause. This, Sir, is the plastic power of our creation. It gives us a certain, not a precarious, existence. It is the single circumstance, which, under every change of ministers, ensures to us the meeting annually within these walls. Were the land and malt taxes made permanent, could a revenue adequate to the whole annual public expence, and probable contingencies, with necessary ways and means, be voted by Parliament for a term of years, I should suspect the present set of ministers would advise as long an intermission of Parliaments as took place under some of the Stuarts. I do not mean, Sir, that they have now any thing to dread from the same representatives of an injured people, whom former ministers, who held the same principles and conduct, used to approach with fear and trembling. Ministers have now drawn the sting of this great popular assembly. We have seen this very session such a servile complaisance, such an extreme of contradiction to themselves, as shocks common faith, and must disgrace the majority here in the eyes of all Europe. No cameleon ever shifted more suddenly to the opposite colour, than they have done from insolence, intemperate rage, and war, to meekness, peace, and almost humiliation to the Americans.

Can any thing, Sir, be more alarming to the acknowledged right and privilege of this House, than the doctrine lately propagated, and the practice begun, of giving private aids, benevolences, and subscriptions, for public purposes, to the Crown without the sanction of Parliament? The constitution has wisely placed in the Crown the right of raising forces on a very pressing and dangerous emergency. It is a power necessary for the safety of the state, for the defence of the people. The strongest check is however at the same time given to any improper exercise of this power. It is controlled by the necessity of an application to Parliament for the maintenance of such forces. If troops could be raised, kept up, and paid, without the concurrence of this House, the liberties of this country must be at the mercy of the military, and their commander in chief, perhaps an ambitious prince. Our statute law, Sir, is not silent on this occasion. Every year in the mutiny act it is expressly declared, that, "the raising or keeping a standing army within this kingdom, in time of peace, unless it be with the consent of Parliament,

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is against law." But, Sir, if the Crown can by a prerogative, which is not disputed, raise a standing army, and by private loans, benevolences, or subscriptions, keep this standing army on foot, no application whatever need be made to Parliament. Our government would be that of the sword, not of the law, to which all appeals must be trifling and inefficacious. Parliaments are now convened to vote necessary supplies, which are regularly asked of the Commons on the first day of the session. If government could receive them in any other mode than by the grants of this House, the legislature itself would not only lose its most important function, but become unnecessary, and very soon obnoxious. The executive power must be trusted with the raising of forces, but it is likewise the duty of this House to their constituents to take care that the number of those forces be so proportioned to the defence of the state, that the security of the subject may be provided for, and yet no alarm given to a nation very justly jealous of the least danger to its liberties. While the military receive their pay from the grants of this House, the maintenance of the army must depend on the approbation of Parliament; but if an artful or enterprizing prince can find other resources, the soldier will then look up to the prince, and not to the representatives of the people. The executive and legislative power must now concur in the measure of keeping on foot any number of regular troops, both in its first adoption and continuance, or it cannot be the act of all the constituent parts of this government. If a designing prince, hostile, like most princes, to the cause of liberty, should be able to raise an army, and by foreign gold, and the mad zeal or interested views of a party among us, could contrive to keep it on foot without the aid of Parliament, what security have we for the preservation of our civil rights and privileges? The refusal of supplies in this House to force the disbanding an army could have no valid effect, for the parliamentary grants would not be solicited. Future princes might govern, like the Stuarts, without Parliaments, by the exertion of an over-stretched prerogative, and even juries be under the controul of a crown officer, when the grand inquest of the nation was superseded.

The constitution of this country, Sir, would be wounded in another branch of the legislature, in the House of Lords, by any grants of money, but through the medium of Parliament. The Peers have undoubtedly the right to reject a money bill. They may now, by their negative, force the disbanding any number of troops, which they think unnecessary, or dangerous to the safety of the nation. This important privilege

vilege would be taken from them, if such a body of troops were to be maintained by any private loans, benevolences, or subscriptions. The whole authority of the state would thus be absorbed in the Crown, and the two other branches of the legislature become a mere phantom, supposing even their forms to be preserved.

I expect, Sir, that it will be asked, are we not at liberty voluntarily to give our money to the Crown? Are free gifts from the subject to the King illegal? There is, Sir, scarcely a country in Europe which has not groaned under the oppression of what are called free gifts. The very term is become ridiculous. Many a peasant has perished in a loathsome dungeon, because he would not be compelled to a *don gratuit*. The English history supplies innumerable instances of the cruel exaction of what have been termed voluntary loans and benevolences to the King. Many families have been ruined under the Tudors and Stuarts, because they would not be compelled to make free will offerings against their consent to the sovereign. The indiscreet ardour of a few begins a subscription, or loan, and then the rest of a nation are compelled, under pain of our utmost royal displeasure, to the same exertion, sometimes to their utter destruction. Neither can equality be observed in such contributions, whereas the fair and equal proportion of what every subject should pay to the exigencies of the state is one of the most important objects of every legislature. It becomes then the wisdom of Parliament to put a stop to all abuses of this nature by an express statute.

I have heard, Sir, the act of the 13th of Charles II. mentioned as an enacting law on this occasion; but, Sir, it by no means reaches the present case. That act only provides, "that no commissions or aids of this nature can be issued out, or levied, but by authority of Parliament, and that this act, and the supply hereby granted, shall not be drawn into example for the time to come." The nature of those aids and commissions was by authority under the great seal of England, to empower certain persons to receive such subscriptions as his Majesty's good subjects should voluntarily offer; no person, not being a peer of this realm, in such offer or present, to exceed the sum of 200*l*. nor any peer of this realm the sum of 400*l*. Reference is always, in this act, to commissions issued under the great seal. The necessity, however, of such an act at such a period plainly shews the sentiment of that Parliament, as to the general doctrine of loans and subscriptions, without the concurrence of the legislature.

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There was, Sir, something peculiarly offensive to this House in the manner and time, which the zealous partizans of a desperate administration chose, for the late unconstitutional mode of raising money without consent of Parliament. The minister had dictated to the majority an adjournment of a very unusual length. Immediately after, their agents were busily employed in getting subscriptions and raising troops. There had not been the least previous intimation of the new plan to this House, nor the usual message from the Crown. No alarming state-symptom had recently appeared, according to the apprehension of ministers. The noble Lord with the blue ribband [Lord North] assured us, that he knew nothing of a treaty between America and France, nor did he believe its existence, so judiciously had the immense sums we had voted for secret services been applied. The House adjourned on the tenth of December, and we have on our table a letter from the war-office of the 16th, in which the secretary at war tells a gentleman very near me, [Sir Thomas Egerton, bart.] that he “was commanded by the King to acquaint him, that his Majesty approves of the very handsome offers made by the town of Manchester, through him, for raising a regiment of foot at their own expence, the regiment to consist of eight battalion companies, one company of grenadiers, and one of light infantry.” The eagerness of the inhabitants of that loyal town to subscribe, could only find a parallel in their efforts in the year 1746, and in the splendid zeal of another equally well-affected town in the same county, I mean Liverpool. It appears from the same letter, that the Manchester regiment was to consist of no less than 1000 private men, besides a colonel, lieutenant-colonel, major, captains, lieutenants, ensigns, serjeants, corporals, drummers, and fifiers. The same establishment was to take place for Liverpool. Lord Barrington promises, in the King’s name, that, “the officers shall be entitled to half-pay, in case the regiment shall be reduced after it has been once established.” This was to be considered as an engagement from the public, although without the least communication to Parliament, or consent of this House. The same promises were made to all the different corps which were to be raised during the late adjournment in another part of this island, where the protestant succession in the illustrious house of Hanover is now become the idol of the people. All the new-raised Scottish regiments were to be entitled to half-pay. These absolute engagements for public money to be afterwards voted by Parliament, were made in direct violation of
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the rights of the representatives of the people, and this murdered constitution. On such terms the secretary at war's letters on our table state, that Colonel Gordon's, Colonel Mackenzie's, Colonel Murray's, Colonel Maclean's, Lieutenant Colonel Campbell's, Lieutenant Colonel Mac Donnell's, the Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Liverpool regiments, were to be raised. Private subscriptions for the raising of these corps were at the same time warmly solicited by the agents of administration, and carried on with an uncommon spirit, immediately after the adjournment for the holidays. Some great men had the additional *douceur* of "the list of the other gentlemen recommended through them for commissions, being honoured with the royal approbation, and the secretary's assurance, in the King's name, that they should have commissions as soon as ever the regiment was raised;" besides the bribe of the half-pay. The secretary of state, Sir, for the northern department, ventured to assert, in the King's name, that these private subscriptions were constitutional. In a letter from that learned Lord, the Earl of Suffolk, to Sir John Wodehouse, of February 17, it is said, "I have had the honour of laying before the King a copy of the resolutions delivered to me; and am now to inform you, that his Majesty is fully sensible of the constitutional zeal and loyalty which dictated those resolutions." The most important of these resolutions, which were agreed to at Norwich, is the raising money, by a private subscription, for several avowed public purposes respecting the army. The subscribers not only gave liberally from their own purses, but promised to use their best endeavours, and to exert their utmost influence, in that county and city, towards carrying those resolutions into execution; contrary to what has been demonstrated to be the established doctrine of the constitution, that the crown cannot receive the money of the subject, for public purposes, but through the medium of Parliament. It ought, surely, Sir, to be the consent of the whole people, by their representatives, not the partial benevolence of a few interested individuals, in what some, as private men, may imagine a common concern of the state, while others find it a lucrative job for themselves and their dependents, by the gift or traffic of commissions, with the reversion of half-pay for life, entailed on the nation.

I confess, Sir, that there is one circumstance, with respect to the Manchester, Liverpool, and some Scottish regiments, which gives me pleasure. I rejoice that they are to be sent

to Gibraltar and Port Mahon, to replace the Hanoverians; for I think not only the spirit of the constitution grossly violated, while the electoral troops of Hanover remain in possession of those fortresses, but the statute law of the realm may be evaded. In the "act for the further limitation of the crown, and better securing the rights and privileges of the subject," it is declared, "that all and every person and persons, who shall or may take and inherit the said crown, by virtue of the limitation of this present act; and is, are, or shall be, reconciled to, or shall hold communion with, the see or church of Rome, or shall profess the Romish religion, or shall marry a Papist, shall be subject to such incapacities, as in such case or cases are by the said recited act provided, enacted, and established." We all remember, Sir, a very near relation of the crown, the Hereditary Prince of Hesse, married to a daughter of England, openly embracing the Romish religion. If a misguided prince could ever be so far perverted as to follow the religion, as well as the maxims, of the last Stuart King, and the Hanoverian troops should then be in possession of Gibraltar and Port Mahon, although the crown of England would be forfeited, the Elector of Hanover might still secure the possession of those important fortresses, which belong only to the imperial crown of this realm. I approve likewise the departure of those regiments; for I recollect what passed in the march of the Scottish rebel army southward, in 1746. I shall be glad to hear of their absence, because I do not think an invasion of this country, at the present crisis, quite so chimerical a project as the conquest of America. I have read in the London Gazette, where truth was found in the last reign, a "list of the rebel officers, in the Manchester regiment, taken at Carlisle," by the hero of Culloden.

I am aware, Sir, that at the period to which I have alluded, many subscriptions were carried on, and regiments raised, without a previous application to Parliament. At the breaking out of that rebellion, the legislative body was not sitting. A long prorogation in the autumn, had taken place, as usual. The capital of Scotland had surrendered to the rebels, even before the Parliament could be assembled. Never was a more easy, or perhaps willing, conquest. The rebels were in full march into the heart of the kingdom. Every thing dear and valuable to Englishmen was at stake. Without the most vigorous exertions, the cause of public virtue must have sunk for ever. The greatness of the crisis called for such

spirited measures, as could not be warranted in times of profound peace and public tranquillity. In this sense only ought the famous passage in Lord Hardwicke's speech to be understood. The first law of every state is the *salus populi*. When that Lord High Steward passed sentence of death on the Scottish peers in 1746, he observed, "Men of property, of all ranks and orders, crowded in with liberal subscriptions, of their own motion, beyond the examples of former times, and uncompelled by any law; and yet in the most legal and warrantable manner, notwithstanding what has been ignorantly and presumptuously suggested to the contrary." He delivers the *dictum* with unusual and indecent warmth, with the furious zeal of a convert; for of this ignorance and presumption his Lordship had unluckily been himself guilty. A well-known letter from him to a gentleman in Surry, a near relation of a worthy member [James Scawen, Esq.] whom I see in his place, which is still extant, in the most express terms condemns all private subscriptions to the crown, for public purposes, as absolutely illegal. But, Sir, I confess, that I very little value the sentiments of lawyers in general, on the great topics of government. We have indeed in this House three or four gentlemen of the law, of the most enlarged understanding, and extensive genius; but the common observation still holds good, that lawyers, of all professions, seem least to understand the nature of government in general; like under workmen, who are expert enough at making a single wheel in a clock, but are totally ignorant how to adjust the several parts, or regulate the movement. That wise and deeply learned Whig, Lord Hardwicke's professed model the great Chancellor Somers, would not, I believe, have delivered such a doctrine as law. Yet, Sir, in my humble idea, those subscriptions were not only justifiable, but meritorious, I will venture to say patriotic; for they tended to the salvation of the country. Perhaps, Sir, after the extinction of that wicked, unprovoked rebellion, we ought to have acted as we did in the case of the embargo on all ships laden with wheat or wheat flour, in September, 1766. The order of the King and council was certainly irregular, illegal; but it saved the people from famine; and therefore was sanctified by an act of the whole legislature. The preamble of that indemnity bill says, "Which order could not be justified by law; but was so much for the service of the public, and so necessary for the safety and preservation

servation of his Majesty's subjects, that it ought to be justified by act of Parliament."

I expect, Sir, to hear it objected, that the present time is by no means a proper season for such a motion; as we are probably on the eve of a war with France, and the whole House of Bourbon. This objection will have no weight with me; for no man can be more zealous to strengthen the hands of government, even to strain every nerve of the state, in a just war against France, our ancient enemy, the common enemy of the liberties of Europe. I would, however, do it in a parliamentary way. I wish this House, in a good cause, to grant the amplest supplies against that ambitious, formidable, and encroaching power; although I think the present ministers wholly inexcusable, in being thus long duped by flimsy pretexts, and unmeaning verbal assurances. The message to this House of March 17, tells us, that the conduct of France is "contrary to the most solemn assurances, and subversive of the laws of nations." Those most solemn assurances deceived none but the credulous court of England, and the ministers on the other side of the House, who wished to be deceived. As to the law of nations, in my opinion, it clearly justified the conduct of France. I call on any gentlemen, the deepest read in Grotius, Puffendorff, and the other writers on the rights of war and peace, and the law of nations, to prove, from a single passage, that the French ambassador's late declaration is subversive of the law of nations. The United States of America were, at the conclusion of the late treaty, on a footing with all other states. They had, by the most public acts, with a full chorus of applause from almost the whole northern hemisphere, asserted their independency, of which they had at that time near two years full possession. The present conduct of France to America likewise receives the fullest justification, from the former conduct both of England and France to Holland and Portugal, when they separated from the Spanish monarchy, and became independent states. We both went further than France has done in this instance. France and England, at that time, furnished entire regiments, ships of war, ammunition, and all warlike stores, to the revolted subjects of the Spanish monarch. The immediate cause of complaint, at the present period, is only that France has concluded a treaty of amity and commerce with America. Is this an unjust aggression on England? Is this a just cause of hostilities on our side, and will it warrant the involving
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this country, as well as France, in all the horrors and calamities of war? France seems indeed to be taking a dreadful revenge on us, by securing to herself the commerce of America, as an indemnity for all she suffered during the last war; but, in the treaty, she has acted according to the law of nations. Yet, Sir, if we must be forced into a war, I do not despond. With the same great minister, who so gloriously conducted that war, and the same noble efforts in the people, I should not doubt of equally brilliant success; provided we had peace with America, to whom, in no small degree, we owe what share of consideration we have among the powers of Europe. The navy of this country, which is its surest bulwark, owes its greatness to our colonies, has “grown with their growth, and strengthened with their strength;” a navy which has ungratefully and barbarously laid their towns in ashes. Trade and commerce, the support of most nations, the chief care of the wisest, have derived their late vigour and spirit from America. What dreadful commercial calamities have we suffered since the unhappy contest with her! If she joins the whole House of Bourbon against us, I shall begin to be alarmed for our own independence. At least, the power and glory of England, which have not, till this fatal period, withered, like a fair flower, nor been mowed by the scythe of all-devouring Time, that strikes empires from their root, be in danger of being cut off by the sword of her justly incensed offspring. We have been found unequal to the contest with America alone. A Congress, worthy of Rome, while Rome was free, *tumidas contudit minas* of an insolent minister, and the venal majority of a British Parliament. All our ministers, Sir, have been grossly ignorant as to the real strength of that vast northern continent. Even the great man, who is now removed into the other House, delivered a very weak and ill-founded opinion here, in the debate on the repeal of the accursed stamp-act, that “the force of this country could crush America to atoms.” The force of this country, aided by Hessians, Hanoverians, and all the other German mercenaries, has effected nothing, but unfoldier-like retreats, in three years. The united force of Europe, Sir, cannot crush America to atoms, if we consider the natural strength of the various component parts of that immense continent. Peace, peace, therefore, with America, ought to be our object. Force has been found as unavailing as ill-directed.

I fear our conduct has cemented the union between America and France. Since the affair of General Burgoyne, and the French acknowledgment of their independence, it cannot be supposed that the Americans will ever think of returning to a dependence on this country. The experiment, however, Sir, might be made, of endeavouring to detach the United States from France, by an acknowledgment of their independence, and a league of more than amity and commerce, a treaty offensive and defensive with the mother country. The same religion, language, laws, love of liberty, the same common stock and progenitors, the *genus Latinum Albanique patres*, a reciprocity of the important interests of commerce, all these might consolidate the base of a firmer, more compact alliance, than ever yet was formed between two empires. But, alas! perhaps these are only pleasing visions, mere phantoms of the imagination, unsubstantial mockeries, and the reality will be an obstinate and bloody war, to be concluded, possibly, even in this reign, in a farther dismemberment of the British monarchy. I heartily wish, Sir, a war with France could be avoided. I know we are unprepared, and that the people have no confidence in government. They have even a horror of ministers, who have lost more than half our empire. The provocation of the day cannot justify a war. The treaty is only of amity and commerce with America, not of hostility against Great Britain, or any power. England, in my opinion, ought to have done what France has done. But has she, Sir, acted against us in a manner to justify hostilities on our part? Is the principle, or the policy, of our conduct, quite ascertained to be just, wise, or expedient? An ignorant and incapable set of ministers have brought us into so disgraceful a situation, that we can neither proceed with safety, nor retreat with honour. In such contempt is this nation now held, that even Portugal, which was lately almost a province of this kingdom, looks down upon us with insolence.

Sir, the spirit of liberty is a spirit of jealousy. It ought to be more so than ever at the present æra, which seems peculiarly fatal to the cause of public freedom in Europe, while it is victorious in the western world. Every man, who wishes well to the free English government, must be alarmed for its safety, when he reflects on the fate of the neighbouring nations, of the most considerable states. A late event ought always to be in the perspective of the true lovers of public liberty. The kingdom of Sweden, one of the freest monarchies

monarchies in the world, has recently fallen under the galling yoke of despotism, by the treachery and perjury of its king. The most solemn legal obligations, and explicit compacts, enforced, as it was supposed, by the most sacred sanction of oaths, were found insufficient to secure the liberties of that brave people from the invasion of the military; at the instigation, and by the command, of a monarch, to whom every species of fraud and deceit seems familiar. No sovereign, in any age or country, ever made stronger and less equivocal promises to his people, cemented by all the holy ties of religion. The speeches from the throne always held out a profound veneration for the laws, an inviolable attachment to the established constitution. The pious hypocrite not only expressed his own abhorrence of arbitrary power, but declared that he would consider those as the worst enemies of his person and government, as the vilest traitors to their country, who should, in any way, and under any pretence, seek to add to his power, or to introduce an unlimited authority in his person. He even pretended to think it his greatest glory to be the first citizen of a free country; and he asserted, that to govern it free and independent was his highest ambition. He repeatedly, with great parade, reminded the Swedish nation of the oaths he had taken to them, and the excellence of the constitution, to which he was so religiously attached; while at the same time he was meditating the means of enslaving his people. By the assistance of the army, he has acquired the most absolute and despotic power. According to the new form of government, the states of Sweden cannot assemble, but by the royal permission. The King is to chuse the senate. They have no right to deliberate upon any thing, but what the King pleases to lay before them. If the contributions are not granted within three months, the old are to remain. In cases of necessity, the King may impose taxes, till the states are assembled. There would have been no necessity for this, if a slavish party among his own subjects had been willing and able, by any private aids, loans, benevolences, or subscriptions, to put it in his power to support a military establishment, and to raise new levies at his pleasure. He, as well as the Sovereign of England, has the sole disposition of the army, navy, and all employments, civil and military.

The perjured Sovereign of Sweden, by the assistance of only a small part of the military, has enslaved his people, and made himself the absolute tyrant of a limited monarchy,
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in which he was born and educated, and whose constitution he was sworn to preserve.*

I know, Sir, that in the important motion, which I have the honour of submitting to the House, I stand on the firm,

* In the King of Sweden's speech at the opening of the diet, on the 25th of June, 1771, he declared, "*Born and educated among you, I learned from my early youth to love my country, to consider it as my greatest happiness that I was a Swede, as my greatest glory, that I was the first citizen of a free people. To see this nation happy, is my first object; to govern a free and independent people, the height of my ambition. Do not suppose these are vain words, contradicted perhaps by the secret sentiments of my heart. They are the true pictures of a heart glowing with the most ardent love for glory, and for my country—A heart too honest to dictate what it does not feel, too proud ever to recede from an engagement.*" On the 28th of February, 1772, his Swedish Majesty solemnly confirmed, by oath, and his signature, the twenty-four articles of the *Act of Bond or Obligation to the People*.

Mr. Sheridan says, *the King, who that morning [Aug. 19, 1772] rose from his bed the most limited prince in Europe, in the space of two hours, rendered himself no less absolute at Stockholm, than the French Monarch is at Versailles, or the Grand Seignior at Constantinople.* Page 300.

Since the establishment of the late form of government, in the year 1720, the Swedes had hitherto beheld only *foreigners* on the throne, Frederic the First, and Frederic Adolphus. Page 255.

A History of the late Revolution in Sweden; by Charles Francis Sheridan, Esq. of Lincoln's-Inn, and Secretary to the British Envoy in Sweden, at the time of the late Revolution.

The King of Sweden was congratulated, in the highest strains of flattery, by the courts of France and England, which perfectly agreed in their joy on this victory over liberty. The French Gazette gave a false and partial account of this *inglorious revolution*, which was said to be *peu préparée*, and observed, "*tout manquoit à sa Majesté Suédoise; elle ne s'est pas manquée à elle même; sa prudence, sa fermeté, son audace, disons mieux, sa vertu a supplée à tout. Les Senateurs, assemblés dans leur salle ordinaire étoient aux fenêtres lorsque des officiers vinrent leur apporter l'ordre de rester tranquilles dans l'appartement—they voulurent répliquer, mais leur pouvoir aristocratique n'imposoit plus; ils durent obéir.*"

The present King of Sweden was in Paris at the time of his father's death, in February, 1771. It is agreed, that he planned in that capital the ruin of the liberties of his country.

constitutional ground of English liberty, and the rights of Parliament. I therefore particularly claim, and call for, the support and assistance of those whom I love and venerate, the real Whigs, and friends of this excellent constitution. They are naturally jealous of every infringement on the peculiar privileges of this House, as the representatives of all the Commons. The fundamental rights of Englishmen have always been their peculiar care. Any accession of power to the dangerous influence of the crown, without the sanction of Parliament, they must reprobate. In this case, our very existence, as a legislative body, is brought into jeopardy. From every principle of duty to the free system of government under which we live, and even of self-preservation, this motion ought to be supported; and, in consequence, I hope for unanimity, when I supplicate the House, "that leave be given to bring in a bill, more effectually to prevent the dangerous and unconstitutional practice of giving, or granting money to the crown, as a private aid, loan, benevolence, or subscription, for public purposes, without the consent of Parliament."

Sir *Thomas Egerton* thanked the honourable gentleman, Sir *Thomas Egerton*, for taking notice of his letter; said, the people of Manchester were as loyal subjects as any the King had; and what induced them to subscribe, or propose to raise a regiment, was to assist his Majesty in asserting and maintaining the just rights of the constitution. It was true, some of the people of Manchester were in rebellion in 1745; but he thought it extremely ungenerous to rake up the ashes and faults of the dead, as a ground of throwing the most unjust calumnies on the living. He said, the number engaged in the unhappy affair alluded to, were comparatively few that lived near the town; and could affirm, from his own knowledge, that as there were no people more personally attached to the person of the King, so there were none who were more eager or ready to support the rights of the constitution.

Mr. *Burke* said, British liberty would be but a mere shadow, if the King on the throne could either legally or constitutionally raise troops without the consent of Parliament. There were cases of emergency, when the safety of the state depended upon a timely and constitutional exercise of the prerogative; such as in the case of an invasion, dearth, &c. but pending the sitting of Parliament, he held any attempt to raise troops, without a consent direct or implied, no better than a royal usurpation of parliamentary rights. He

He said, a supineness, a political stupor, had seized Parliament, and that we now seemed to be just ripe for ruin.

Ld Nugent. Lord *Nugent* spoke a few words; said the vote of credit was a full, legal, and constitutional authority for the measure.

The question being put, the motion was negatived by a majority of 71 to 40.

Lord North. Lord *North* gave notice, that he would to-morrow move to have some allowance made to subscribers to the loan, in order to make up the loss sustained by them, on account of the event which took place before their first payment was made; alluding to the notification delivered by the French ambassador.

Mr. Byng. Mr. *Byng* said, he never heard of such—he was going to say, so barefaced a proposition, or imposition. This, indeed, would be a precedent, with a witness, for all succeeding ministers. Did not the noble Lord tell the House, with his usual confidence and tone of authority, what great advantage he had given subscribers; and had he the face to come now, to put his hand into the national pocket, in order to recompense his friends, who had, as a mark of favour, of private and parliamentary kindness, got great sums in the loan? Was the noble Lord to have shared the profits, if there were any; and was the nation only to be the sharers of the losses?

Mr. Baker. Mr. *Baker* said, he was astonished at the noble Lord's temerity, and his consequent contempt of Parliament; it was, indeed, beyond endurance. He would put a question to the noble Lord: Suppose, as had often been the case, in former loans, that the subscribers had made three, five or eight per cent. would the subscribers come to his Lordship, or that House, and refund the difference? Would they come to the bar, and tell the chair, Our gains have been exorbitant; we run no risque; we might win, but could not lose; and we are now, as a matter of right and justice, come to make a tender of our profits?

Mr. Burke. Mr. *Burke* was equally severe on the minister. He contended, that the idea of loans was ridiculous, if this was to be the effect of them.

Lord North. Lord *North* replied, he thought the proposition but just; as the event alluded to had happened before the first subscription. If the subscribers were to be the sufferers, it would be out of the power of any minister to raise a loan at a future time upon any critical occasion.

Mr. Grenville. Mr. *Grenville* said, the noble Lord knew, at the time the budget was opened, that the event would happen in a few days,

days, and before the day that the first payment was to be made. He dared say, the noble Lord would hardly deny it; and if he knew, he would repress his feelings, and leave it to the House to fix upon an epithet suited to such a conduct; the House might find out a name, he could not, for the part the noble Lord had acted. He said, he would move a similar motion to that he moved before—for an address to his Majesty, to lay before the House copies of all letters received from our ambassador at the court of Paris, &c. relative to the treaty entered into between France and America.

Question put; House divided; Ayes 45, Noes 66.

House then went into committee on house tax bill, Mr. Gilbert in the chair.

Sir George Yonge spoke against the principle of the bill; said Sir George Yonge. the tax was unequal.

Mr. Byng said, it was in every sense a land-tax; that some Mr. Byng. places already pay 4s. 6d. land-tax, particularly the parish in which he resided.

Sir Grey Cooper said, it would not operate as a land-tax, for Sir Grey Cooper. gentlemen might pay it optionally; they might live in less houses, or reside abroad, but cannot shift or avoid the land-tax. People in general of all descriptions would live in houses suited to their fortunes.

Mr. Byng moved, that houses rented at 10l. a year, and Mr. Byng. under, should not pay.

Sir Cecil Wray was of the same opinion.

Mr. Burke said, there were many small freeholders who Sir Cecil Wray. Mr. Burke. owned houses of 6l. or 8l. a year, who worked harder, and were much poorer, than many that paid rent, and were only day-labourers.

Question put, and negatived by a majority of 69 to 51.

Moved, that houses at 7l. and under be exempted. Committee divided; Ayes 61, Noes 68.

Sir George Yonge moved, that houses let at 6l. and under Sir George Yonge. should not pay. Observed, that the minister had produced no information of the sum any particular description of houses would bring in; said, such a neglect was shameful, and was treating Parliament with indecency and contempt.

Sir Grey Cooper said, the charge of neglect was ill founded; Sir Grey Cooper. if the noble Lord, or administration, had been remiss in their duty, they were ready to submit their conduct to the judgment of the House, but not to individuals.

Sir George
Yonge.

Sir George Yonge said, he did not mean individuals; nor did he know before, that the honourable gentleman was the tax-minister.

Mr. Powys for the motion; Colonel Onflow against it; Mr. F. Cornwall and Mr. Byng spoke for the motion. Question put; Ayes 58, Noes 81.

Mr. Saw-
bridge.

Mr. Sawbridge said, it was supposed the tax would raise 200,000*l.* out of which 180,000*l.* would be raised in the metropolis.

Then motion for 5*l.* 5*s.* per annum; Ayes 57, Noes 83. Then for 5*l.* 1*s.* Ayes 58, Noes 85.

Ld. Ongley.

Lord Ongley in favour of the tax, and recommended one on public houses, which he said would bring in 70,000*l.* a year.

At twelve o'clock the minority moved to adjourn. For the question 27, against it 49.

Proceeded till one o'clock, and adjourned.

April 3.

Sir Grey
Cooper.

In committee on the house-tax bill, several amendments were proposed and rejected. Sir Grey Cooper proposed to tax the farm-houses.

Mr. Powys.

Mr. Powys called upon Lord North, and reminded him of his opinion, that farm-houses were not a proper object of taxation, yet he had now broke his word, and changed his opinion.—He said, if a person rented land to which a large house was attached, he would be liable to be taxed to the estimated value, though perhaps he did not occupy one fourth of it.

Sir George
Yonge.

Sir George Yonge said to the same purport, and observed, that a house might be taxed at an higher value than the farmer actually paid for house and land.

Ld. North.

Lord North said, he never entertained a second opinion on the subject; that he felt the objection against taxing farm houses, but he did not see how the line could be drawn, without so far as it went defeating the tax.—If any gentleman could propose a medium, he professed himself willing to adopt it.

Sir Richard
Sutton.

Sir Richard Sutton offered an amendment to the clause, that houses coming within the description alluded to, should be taxed at the rate of ten pounds per annum, and no more, and that farm houses rated at a lower rent, should be exempted.

The clause was agreed to without any opposition, and the bill being gone through, the Chairman ordered to report the bill and amendments.

As soon as the Speaker took the chair, Lord *North* in-
formed the House, that the proposition he promised to sub-
mit to the House relative to indemnifying the subscribers to
the loan that day, he proposed to defer till some day in the
course of the next week.—He observed, that the House was
thin, but if there had been a full attendance, he should have
postponed it for a few days.

Mr. *David Hartley* said, he wished that the noble Lord
would entirely lay aside all further thoughts of his intended
proposition; for whatever other objections, in point of œco-
nomy, or otherwise, there might be against it, there was one
which to him was amply sufficient; that he foresaw it would
be highly injurious to public credit.

Sir *George Yonge* adopted the same opinion, and moved, that
the list of the names sent from the treasury to the bank, of
those who were to have scrip; and the list returned from the
bank to the treasury, shewing who had paid the ten per cent.
be laid before that House.

After a few words private conversation with Lord *North*,
Mr. *David Hartley* rose a second time, and said he wished the
honourable gentleman would withdraw his motion for the
present, and see whether the noble Lord would persist in his
first intention, that of making the proposition.—He hoped
the noble Lord would think better of it.—It would cause great
confusion in the first instance, and prevent the people from
relying on acts of parliament, relative to money transactions,
in future.

Sir *George Yonge* withdrew his motion, and the House ad-
journed to the 6th.

April 6.

Mr. *Robinson* reported the house-tax bill with the amend-
ments.

Mr. *Byng* moved an amendment to Sir *Richard Sutton's*
amendment, that houses of ten pounds a year be in-
serted as taxable instead of five pounds and upwards. He
said, this became necessary, as the farmer who rented two or
three hundred acres of land was exempted, while a poor, la-
bouring man that rented a house at five or six pounds, and did
not occupy even a half of that, but let it out in rooms to persons
of his own description, would be obliged to pay, or be subject
to have his bed taken from under him, and sold to pay the tax.

Sir *George Yonge* declared himself of the same opinion; said,
he disliked the power vested in the surveyor, to ascertain the
rent of houses at his own discretion.

Mr. Baldwin.

Mr. *Baldwin* said, as the public faith had been pledged to those who subscribed, he must vote for the bill as it stood reported, unless those who proposed to diminish the fund for paying the annuities to the public creditors would substitute some other tax by way of equivalent.

The question was put for the amendment, and carried by a majority of 77 to 70.

Sir William Meredith.

Sir *William Meredith* rose, and stated the grounds of his promised motion. He descanted on the several obnoxious acts passed since the year 1763, pointing out their destructive tendency one by one. He said, every step towards a reconciliation with our colonies would prove fruitless, without a full, open, and unequivocal repeal. It was his sincere opinion, that America would never accept of our friendship, unless it was founded upon a basis of interest, equally broad and comprehensive with what they were likely to draw from their present connection with France. If we made offers of a similar nature with France, most certainly America would give Great Britain the preference. Our brethren, descended from the same stock, speaking the same language, professing nearly the same religion, and formed to the same studies, habits, and pursuits, we had every chance to succeed and to rival France, should the Colonies find an equal interest, by giving way to their prejudices, and their native affection for the parent state. He said, that other nations would be jealous of their manufactures and commodities; Sweden of her iron; Denmark of her timber; Russia of her naval stores; in short, every power to the northward. He advised not to send out the commissioners with their present powers. To give power to suspend, and not repeal, was doing next to nothing; or even repealing the rest, and leave the declaratory law standing, and the same difficulty would recur. For suppose commissioners should be authorised to assure the Congress, that the declaratory act would be repealed, what possible security could the Congress have for the performance, Parliament being still at liberty to dissent, though America should agree to conciliate? He then moved, that an act of the 6th of the present king, intituled "an act for the better securing the dependency of his Majesty's dominions in America, upon the crown and parliament of Great Britain" might be read. It was read. He then moved, That leave be given to bring in a bill to repeal the said act.

Mr.

Mr. *P. Burrel* seconded the motion. He described the state of our fleets, armies, finances, negotiations, in strong colours, and warmly pressed the necessity of a repeal. Mr. P. Burrel.

Mr. *Powys* spoke for the repeal. Mr. Powys.

Mr. *Fielde* said he approved of the principles of the declaratory act; but observed, that the whole American system and plan, laid down and pursued by administration, had been taken from the Marquis de Montcalm's letters. Mr. Fielde.

Sir *Cecil Wray*.—Was I of opinion with the honourable gentleman who spoke last, I should be against the question for the repeal of the declaratory act. If this country has such a right, I do not apprehend such a repeal would have any effect; it would leave us in directly the same state in which we now are supposed to be, fully possessed of it, though for reasons of convenience we might wish not to talk of it at present. Sir Cecil Wray.

But, Sir, I give my vote for the question under a sincere conviction, that the declaration contained in the act is so far from being true, that the very reverse of it is so, and that the Parliament of Great Britain has no power to pass laws binding America in any case whatsoever.

When America was first settled, the whole right to conquest, discovery, and division of lands was in the King;—it was in his power to grant them to any body, and on any condition. This power he used in America, in all cases without and in some against the consent of Parliament, who never indeed supposed that such feudal rights were vested in them.

At what time the King gave up or Parliament usurped these rights is not now my business to inquire; but I must maintain that unless America had consented to such a cession, America is not bound by it, but her rights remain the same as when first established by her charters.

A late decision in the King's Bench fully establishes this doctrine.—The King may lay any impositions on a conquered country by his own authority, till he has by proclamation or otherwise given up that power by establishing another.

Had I thought this act declaratory of the real power of Parliament, I should have voted for the repeal of the obnoxious acts, on the idea of their inexpediency; but thinking as I do, that the Parliament of Great Britain has no power to pass laws binding America in any case whatsoever, I shall certainly concur with my honourable friend in voting for the repeal of the declaratory act.

Mr.

Mr. Graves. Mr. *Graves* moved, that the debate be adjourned to that day two months. It was agreed to.

April 7.

The House in committee, Lord Middleton in the chair, to take into consideration the acts of Parliament relating to the trade of Ireland.

Earl Nugent.

Earl *Nugent*, on whose motion the committee had been formed, opened the business. From a long series of unshaken loyalty, the Irish, he said, were entitled to every encouragement which good and faithful subjects could deserve, and a wise and grateful government could give; oppressive laws had hitherto been their only reward: he did not, however, mean to complain; if he did, his generous countrymen would disavow his complaints: they now see Great Britain in distress; that silences their resentment; and forgetful of their wrongs, unsolicited they now make a tender of their lives and fortunes for our service. If our narrow policy had not kept them low, they would send over something more substantial than addresses; we should see their armies arrive here for our defence. Would the Parliament of Great Britain suffer every sentiment of gratitude and justice to be inactive in their breasts? Would they become deaf to the voice of policy? He trusted, he was sure, they would not; and he had not a doubt but the House would give ample proof that they were not void of discernment to see, nor of inclination to reward merit. He had taken a view of all the laws which bear hard on Ireland, and, trusting to the justice and humanity of the House, he had drawn up a few resolutions which he hoped the committee would adopt. Some opposition would, he feared, arise from a quarter from which he could never have expected it; he meant from the West-India planters: he could not conceive why they should oppose a relaxation of the trade laws respecting Ireland; he knew several gentlemen who had plantations in the islands; they told him, that they could alledge nothing against the expediency of the measure he was now about to propose: he discovered, indeed, that the planters were much in the power of the merchants here; that the two and a half commission on the sugars exported from this kingdom to Ireland was too lucrative to be given up. He did not doubt but the House would disregard any opposition from such selfish views; he would not, however, have any thing in his motions which could possibly be opposed; he would make them in such a manner, as he hoped would gain them the unanimous approbation of
the

the committee; a circumstance that would make the proposed indulgence to the Irish the more agreeable to that people, and challenge all their gratitude.

His Lordship then moved, that the Irish might be permitted to send on board of British vessels, navigated according to law, to the coast of Africa, and our settlements abroad, all sorts of Irish manufactures, woollen and woollen cloths only excepted.

Mr. *Pelham* professed himself a well-wisher to Ireland; *Mr. Pelham.* and said, that no man had a greater respect for that kingdom than he had; he was not, however, without his doubts, that the present measure would be highly detrimental to the manufactures of this country; the taxes in Ireland being low, and labour cheap, the Irish would be able to undersell us, and thereby ruin several of our trading towns.

Lord *Beauchamp* begged leave to set the honourable gentleman right. The taxes in Ireland were many and high; *Lord Beauchamp.* and, proportionally to the means of paying them, considerably greater than in England. Some gentlemen who had travelled into Ireland, had, from the opulence of its metropolis, and the unbounded hospitality of the people of fashion, formed very unjust ideas of the real state of the kingdom: it was reduced by oppressive laws to a wretched situation; their loyalty was, however, superior to every selfish consideration; they saw nothing but our danger; and though our acts had banished into foreign countries numbers of their brethren, and left them in a miserable state, still they were willing to strain every nerve to serve us in the moment of distress: a braver, more generous, and more loyal people was not to be found; he flattered himself, therefore, that they would be treated by the House according to their high deserts.

Sir *Thomas Egerton* was of opinion, that this kingdom *Sir Thomas Egerton.* would suffer by its indulgence in this point; the manufactures of Lancashire, in particular, would be ruined; and that county alone would, as he was informed, lose one hundred thousand pounds *per annum* in the article of checks only, if the measure now proposed should pass into a law.

Mr. *T. Townshend* expressed his warm approbation of the *Mr. T. Townshend.* motion; was happy to see the mist of prejudice begin to disperse; would be happy to give the measure a broader bottom: though as steadfast a protestant as any gentleman in the House, he declared he should be glad to see some means adopted to grant such indulgencies to the Roman Catholics of Ireland, as might attach that great body of men to the pre-

present government: their affections had been alienated; he wished to recall them by indulgent behaviour. He hated the Romish religion for its persecuting spirit; he would not on that account wish to be a persecutor.

Lord North. Lord North, adverting to what Mr. Townshend had said, declared he would with all his heart concur in any measure that could tend to answer so desirable an end; but it was not their province; it was the province of the Parliament of Ireland: the laws which were so severe against the Roman Catholics had originated there, and redress of domestic grievances should of right originate likewise from them; and he was of opinion, that the Irish Parliament would see where the grievance lay, and redress it, for there was not any where a people of more liberal sentiments than the Irish.

The penal laws of Ireland were the consequence of apprehension, which, however groundless, always adopts the most cruel and severe policy. The Irish complained, and complained with justice. Leaving to the candour of their own Parliament to grant such indulgence to the Roman Catholics as their loyalty deserves; he requested the House would agree to that which was in their power, and their province: to relax the trade laws, would benefit the Irish, and ultimately enrich ourselves; embarked in the same cause with us, they could not be called our rivals in trade, but their rivals were our rivals. The exception of woollen cloths he would say nothing to; it might not, perhaps, be just: but it was a point given up by the Irish, and confirmed by an antient compact: if it should be found in the course of the proceedings on this business that any other exceptions were necessary, the House no doubt would make them. Upon the whole, the motion should meet his hearty concurrence.

On the question being put, it was carried *nem. con.*

Ld. Nugent. Lord Nugent then made another motion, That the Irish might be permitted to import all sorts of ware and merchandise from the coast of Africa and plantations abroad, indigo, tobacco, and sugar only excepted. The word sugar was inserted by his Lordship, merely to prevent an opposition from the West-India merchants; but on the motion of Lord Newhaven, it was left out, and the motion passed *nem. con.*

Ld. Nugent. Lord Nugent again moved, That glass manufactured in Ireland might be exported by the Irish, except into Great Britain; and that Irish cotton yarn might be imported duty-free into Great Britain.

These motions passed unanimously.

Mr.

Mr. *Burke* then moved, That Irish sail-cloth might be imported into this kingdom duty-free. This motion likewise passed *nem. con.*

April 8.

Lord *North* acquainted the House, that he had a message from his Majesty, and he presented the same to the House, and it was read by Mr. Speaker, and is as followeth, *viz.*

“ G E O R G E R.

“ HIS Majesty being restrained by the laws now in being, from making provision for his younger children out of the hereditary revenues of the crown; and being desirous, that competent provisions may be made for the honourable support and maintenance of his dearly beloved sons, Prince Frederick Bishop of Osnaburgh, Prince William Henry, Prince Edward, Prince Ernest Augustus, Prince Augustus Frederick, Prince Adolphus Frederick, and of his dearly beloved daughters, Princess Charlotte Augusta Matilda, Princess Augusta Sophia, Princess Elisabeth, Princess Mary, and Princess Sophia; and for the honourable maintenance and support of Prince William Frederick, and Princess Sophia Matilda, the son and daughter of his dearly beloved brother William Henry Duke of Gloucester; his Majesty hopes, that he shall be enabled, by act of Parliament, to grant an annuity of sixty thousand pounds to the six princes, and an annuity of thirty thousand pounds to the five princesses; and and to grant an annuity of eight thousand pounds to Prince William Frederick, and an annuity of four thousand pounds to Princess Sophia Matilda, the son and daughter of the Duke of Gloucester; the annuities to his Majesty's sons and daughters to take effect after his Majesty's demise, and the annuities to the son and daughter of the Duke of Gloucester to take effect after the death of the Duke of Gloucester. And his Majesty recommends the consideration thereof to this House.

G. R.

Ordered, *nemine contradicente,*

That leave be given to bring in a bill, for enabling his Majesty to settle on their royal highnesses the Princes Frederick Bishop of Osnaburgh, William Henry, Edward Ernest Augustus, Augustus Frederick, and Adolphus Frederick, an annuity of sixty thousand pounds *per annum*; and also to settle on their royal highnesses the Princesses Charlotte Augusta Matilda, Augusta Sophia, Elizabeth, Mary, and

and Sophia, one other annuity of thirty thousand pounds *per annum*; and also to settle on his highness Prince William Frederick one other annuity of eight thousand pounds *per annum*, and on her highness Princess Sophia Matilda one other annuity of four thousand pounds *per annum*; and that the Lord North, the Lord Barrington, the Lord Beauchamp, Mr. Cornwall, the Lord Westcote, the Lord Palmerston, Mr. Thomas Townshend, Mr. Burke, Mr. Jenkinson, Sir Grey Cooper, Mr. Rigby, Mr. Hartley, Mr. Ellis, Lord George Germain, the Earl Nugent, Mr. Baker, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Solicitor General, and Mr. Robinson, do prepare and bring in the same.

Lord Middleton
let on.

Lord *Middleton* (according to order) reported from the committee of the whole House, to whom it was referred to take into consideration the several acts of Parliament relating to the trade and commerce of Ireland, the resolutions which the committee had directed him to report to the House; which he read in his place, and afterwards delivered in at the table, where the same were read, and are as followeth, *viz.*

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this committee, That all goods, wares, and merchandize, being the produce or manufacture of the kingdom of Ireland, be permitted to be exported directly from the said kingdom, in British ships navigated according to law, to be imported into any of the British plantations, or to any of the settlements belonging to Great Britain on the coast of Africa; wool and woollen manufactures only excepted.

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this committee, That all goods, wares, and merchandize, being the produce of any of the British plantations, or of any of the settlements belonging to Great Britain, on the coast of Africa, be permitted to be exported from thence into the said kingdom of Ireland; indigo and tobacco only excepted.

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this committee, That the provisions of an act, made in the nineteenth year of his late majesty, King George the Second, intituled, "An act for granting to his Majesty several rates and duties upon glass, and upon spirituous liquors, and for raising a certain sum of money by annuities, and a lottery, to be charged on the said rates and duties, and for obviating some doubts about making out orders at the Exchequer, for the monies advanced upon the credit of the salt duties, granted and continued to his Majesty, by an act of the last session of Parliament;" and

and also an act made in the last session of Parliament, intituled, "An act for granting to his Majesty a duty upon all servants retained or employed in the several capacities therein mentioned; and for repealing several rates and duties upon glass, imposed by an act made in the nineteenth year of the reign of his late Majesty, and for granting to his Majesty other rates and duties upon glass, in lieu thereof; and for the better collecting the duties upon glass; and for repealing the several rates and duties charged by an act, made in the twenty-ninth year of the reign of his said late Majesty, upon all persons and bodies politic and corporate, having certain quantities of silver plate," which prohibit the exportation of glass from Ireland, manufactured in that kingdom, be repealed, with respect to such glass exported directly from Ireland to any places except to Great Britain.

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this committee, That the duties now payable on the importation of cotton yarn, being the manufacture of Ireland, into Great Britain, do cease, and be no longer paid.

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this committee, That all sail cloth and cordage, of the manufacture of Ireland, be permitted to be imported from Ireland into Great Britain, free of duty.

The first resolution of the committee being read a second time, and an amendment being proposed to be made thereto, the House was moved, "That the standing order of the House, of the 9th day of April, 1772, "That no bill relating to trade, or the alteration of laws concerning trade, be brought into the House, until the proposition shall have been first considered in a committee of the whole House, and agreed unto by the House," might be read; and the same being read accordingly,

Ordered, that the said resolution be recommitted to a committee of the whole House.

The second resolution of the committee being read a second time;

Ordered, That the said resolution be recommitted to the committee of the whole House, to whom the first resolution is re-committed.

The subsequent resolutions of the committee, being read a second time, were agreed to by the House.

Ordered, That a bill, or bills, be brought in, upon the three last of the said resolutions now agreed to by the House.

April 9.

Mr. D.
Hartley.

Mr. *D. Hartley*. Sir, the motions which I shall lay before the committee of the state of the nation to day, are nearly to the same effect as those which I offered to the consideration of the House before Christmas. I was then told by the noble Lord at the head of the revenue, that they were more proper for the consideration of this committee, which was then appointed to sit upon the state of the nation, than to be brought directly, and in the first instance, before the House, which in the formal way of ceremonious business might, perhaps, be true; but as my wish was, that the House and the public should be informed in the earliest period of the session, of the unmeasurable expence of the American war, I took that opportunity of giving a computation of the total expence, from the beginning of the war to the end of the campaign of the year 1778. There was no objection or refutation then attempted by the first Lord of the treasury, to any of the articles, which are, indeed, incontestable; since that time, this subject has been again canvassed and discussed in another House, upon the same grounds and documents which I laid before you upon this subject before Christmas: I have, therefore, very little more to do now, than to walk over the ground again, and just to recite the documents upon which the motions which I shall offer to the committee this day are founded.

In computing the expence of this American war, I shall state the expence of the navy, army, and ordnance in each year since the commencement of the war, and subtract from the expence of each year respectively, the average expence of the navy, army, and ordnance, in the time of profound peace. The difference will shew the expences occasioned by the war.

The first article which it is necessary to state, is the ordinary expence of the navy, army and ordnance upon the peace establishment, under the following heads.

N A V Y.		£.
16000 seamen	- - -	832000
Ordinary of the navy upon an average, from 1764		
to 1772	- - -	410000
Ship-building, upon an average, from 1766 to 1770		284000
Carried over		1526000
		Brought

	Brought over	£. 1526000
Annual encrease of the navy debt upon 16000 seamen, on the average of 1765, 66, 67, 68, 69		111000
Average peace establishment for the navy		<u>1637000</u>

A R M Y.

Guards, garrisons and plantations, about	1000000
Chelsea and half-pay	230000
Staff, widows, &c.	15000
Extraordinaries of the army, upon an average from 1768 to 1775	269000
Average peace establishment for the army	<u>1514000</u>

O R D N A N C E.

Ordinary	170000
Extraordinary	50000
Average peace establishment for the ordnance	<u>220000</u>

RECAPITULATION.

Average expence in time of peace for the navy	1637000
Ditto for the army	1514000
Ditto for the ordnance	220000
Total peace establishment for navy, army and ordnance	<u>3371000</u>

Having thus got a computation of the ordinary peace establishment, I have taken out from the journals the amount of the expences incurred in each year since the commencement of the war, each in totals, are as follows :

	1775.	1776.	1777.
Expences of the navy	2496538	4153214	4590458
Ditto of the army	2206457	4799008	4003948
Ditto of the ordnance	451230	522360	620594
Total navy, army and ordnance for each year	<u>5154225</u>	<u>9474582</u>	<u>9215000</u>
Deduct for the peace establishment	3371000	3371000	3371000
Excess	<u>£. 1783225</u>	<u>6103582</u>	<u>5844000</u>

The

The sums already voted for the present year 1778, are
as follow: £.

For the navy	- - - -	4005895
For the army	- - - -	2842557
For the ordnance	- - - -	382816

7231268

Articles to be added upon computation, viz. militia		500000
Expences upon the vote of credit and for extraor-		
dinaries of the army in 1778	- -	2500000
Encrease of the navy-debt in 1778	- -	2000000
Extras for the ordnance in 1778	- -	400000

Total navy, army and ordnance for 1778	12631268
Deduct the ordinary peace establishment	3371000

Excess in 1778	- - - -	£. 9260268
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These are the excesses of the several years of this war above
the current peace establishment, viz. £.

Excess for 1775	- -	1783000
1776	- -	6103000
1777	- -	5844000
1778	- -	9260000
		22990000

But this is by no means the whole, for besides these expences which appear under the respective heads of account in each year, there must remain immense arrears upon the winding up of bottoms at the conclusion of any war, even if it be supposed that this fatal American war, with all its consequences, could be brought to an end with the present year. In making an estimate of this article, we must look at the experience of the last war, which produced arrears and unliquidated demands to the amount of near 10,000,000/. In the present case, the great distance of the scene of action will enhance every article, being in a country where during the last war every thing was friendly and assisting you, but now unfortunately totally the reverse. The charge of paying the troops till they can be brought home, and before they can be disbanded, particularly the foreign troops, for some of which we are to pay even twelve months after they are returned into their own country; the expence of re-conveying our army, artillery

artillery and stores across the Atlantic, and sending the foreigners to Germany, with all our subsidies, arrears, and demands of every sort, which will be coming in upon us from year to year, and probably a war with the house of Bourbon, cannot be estimated at less than the sum of 10,000,000*l*. Therefore the total expence will stand thus,

For the excesses of the navy, army and ord-	<i>£</i> .
nance, above the current peace establishment, as	
arranged under the respective years 1775, 1776,	
1777, 1778 - - -	22,990,000
Arrears by computation, after the close of	
the war, supposing it to be brought to a termina-	
tion by the end of the year 1778 -	10,000,000
	<i>£</i> . 32,990,000

This sum, enormous as it is, will, I fear, be very short of the reality. At what rate shall I set the loss and destruction of the trade of this country, with all its rich resources and produce? At what rate shall I set the loss of thirteen provinces, once the pride and strength of the parent-state? At what rate shall I set the ruin of the British navy, which has hitherto been the bulwark and safeguard of this country? At what rate shall I set the lives of many thousands of British subjects, whose valour might have been reserved for the defence of their country, instead of being thrown away in the attempt to entail slavery upon the new world? These are losses not to be estimated in the vile trash of pounds, shillings and pence. When will these follies come to an end? The trade, the revenues, and all the strength and resources of this country, are sacrificed to the pursuit of this mad and ruinous war. We have already wasted as much money as the principal of a three shilling land mortgaged for ever would amount to. The interest of thirty-three millions, at only four *per cent.* is 1,320,000*l. per annum*, which is more than the nett produce of three shillings in the pound upon land.

It is endless to be for ever recapitulating all the grievances and follies of this war. It is more than simply self-destruction, it is ruin twice told; for it is not only cutting off our marine and commerce, but it is throwing both from out our own hands into the lap of our enemies. America is the source of the British marine; three ships out of four upon which the British commerce is navigated, are of American building. That marine, and that commerce, which once

were ours, are driven from our ports into those of France. Public credit must in the end sink under such conduct. When the commerce and the marine of this country are destroyed, all the means of supporting public credit are gone. Our merchants are crushed, and not supported by the government they live under; what can we expect but perpetual bankruptcies, with which every Gazette is now filled? Even since the commencement of the present session, the public funds are fallen 25 *per cent.* the 3 *per cents* are fallen from 80 and upwards, down to 60: that fall is the destruction of twenty millions of property. Three and thirty millions may by computation be set as the ostensible expence of the war: but it is only a small part of the total of the destruction of property occasioned by the war; twenty millions more of the property of the stockholders have been annihilated in a few months. The price of land is fallen in the same proportion. What is the landed gentleman to do, who is called upon to discharge a mortgage which may be upon his estate? He must sell his land, perhaps, at twenty or twenty-five years purchase, instead of thirty or thirty-five, and his pittance which remains must stand the brunt of taxation accumulated in every shape. The havock and ruin of this cursed American war overtakes us at every turn. Neither the landed man, nor the merchant, nor the manufacturer, nor the widow, nor the orphan, can escape its fury. All these curses are entailed upon us by the continuance of the American war. The advisers and conductors of this war have a heavy account to answer for to their country. There are thirty or forty thousand seamen lost to this country; thirty or forty thousand land forces destroyed; between thirty and forty millions of money wasted and consumed; one hundred ships of capital force cut off from our natural strength; whole armies swallowed up, and all this to purchase the loss of thirteen colonies; and, perhaps, when we have stripped ourselves of our natural powers of defence, we may invite an invasion at home, and bring the seat of war to our own coasts. Surely, therefore, upon the sum total of the experience which we have so dearly bought, and upon the certain prospect of all the farther evils which threaten this country, I am justly entitled to recommend it, as the opinion of this committee, that it is unbecoming the wisdom and prudence of Parliament to proceed any farther in the support of this fruitless, expensive, and destructive American war.

I never

I never can refrain again and again from pressing upon you the necessity of an immediate peace with America. There is nothing that can destroy the powers and faculties of this country, but its being divided against itself. Give us peace with America, and we shall be ourselves again. Give us again our American family compact, and I shall be the last man to fear the house of Bourbon; and with reason, for confidence should not be vain and visionary, but should take reasonable grounds for its foundation. The unfortunate treaty which is already too far advanced between France and America, may possibly deprive us of the assistance of America in any contest with France, even if you were to make peace with America this moment. But in any case we should at least recover to our use an hundred ships of force, which are now cut off from us, we might recover the use of thirty or forty thousand men both by land and sea, either for defence, or for offence if necessary. If you would make peace with America upon equal and fair terms, trade would again return to your ports, and public credit would thereby feel the means of support. And besides this, what is beyond every thing else in national operations, unanimity would give vigour to our counsels. Foreign powers, instead of despising us for our folly, and lying in wait to take advantage of the wasting of our strength, should stand in awe of the powers of this country, when conducted upon the principles of wisdom and justice, and would abandon the thoughts of any insults or attack upon the honour or rights of this country. They have felt and shrunk under its power when united, and conducted by an able administration. The means are still the same, if there were the same wisdom in our counsels.

No man can charge me with disparaging the powers and faculties of my country; my sentiments have always been the very reverse, that they exist in all their vigour; but that they are misapplied. They are not directed against the natural enemies of this country but against itself. I would wish that this distinction should make an impression upon the minds of the committee, and of the public, and of all foreign courts. If you would be prevailed upon to relinquish this fatal war, all would be well. There would then be no ground or occasion left for a war with France, or with any part of the house of Bourbon. And if they were either so unreasonable, or so unwise, as unnecessarily to provoke a war, we should be well prepared, and capable of resenting every insult, and of repelling every attack upon the national honour. But

it is our folly alone that tempts them. I have pleaded so zealously for the restoration of peace with America, that I wish to attach the explanation with it, as not undervaluing the powers of this country in respect to any foreign nations if we were at peace with ourselves. It is no disparagement to any country to advise them against impossibilities. Give us peace with America, and there is nothing under heaven that this country needs to fear. For these reasons I have drawn up a particular resolution expressive of this well grounded confidence, if such measures of wisdom are pursued, by which the national faculties and exertions may be reserved, for the just and necessary occasions of supporting its own dignity, and defending its own rights, instead of profusely lavishing them away in the pursuits of injustice, folly and madness.

But it may be said; How shall we obtain peace; and upon what terms? We would have an honourable peace. And so we may, for who makes war with us? It depends upon ourselves. We have only to relinquish our folly and quixotism, and there is an end. It is the madness of the undertaking, and the obstinacy of persevering even after conviction that is dishonourable. The dishonour comes from them who would precipitate their country into impossibilities, who advised the King not even to give an answer to the united petition of all America, when they were at the feet of this country seeking for justice. You spurned them from you with indignation. It was the ministry of this country who would admit of no reasonable or constitutional terms. I say, reasonable and constitutional terms, because I presume that the ministry themselves will so denominate the terms which have been lately voted in this House in those conciliatory bills, which have received the unanimous sanction of the legislature. If those terms are reasonable and constitutional now, then they always were so; yet these bills contain neither more nor less than the very offers which were made to this country from the Congress in their last petition three years ago. Many and many propositions, tantamount to these, have been made by the opposers of this mad war, but the ministry have always crushed them by an inflexible influence in the counsels of this House. I myself did, more than three years ago, viz. upon the 27th of March 1775, offer to this House the very identical terms, or nearly so, which are contained in your late conciliatory acts, and which were taken as the foundation of the petition of the Congress in the month of July 1775. The draught of a letter of requisition

to the colonies in the usual and accustomed manner, which I then laid before you, might have made peace at that time, for those terms were accepted by the Congress in their petition to the King and address to the people of Great Britain, a few months after. That they were reasonable and constitutional terms I am justified now at least to say, because in your late conciliatory acts they have received the unanimous sanction of the legislature. I hope therefore that I may stand acquit for one, as never having sacrificed the honour of this country by any mean or unbecoming proposal. It is not towards those who have opposed this mad war, that you are to look as the causes of the irksome situation in which you and yourselves now. If our advice had been followed, things would not now be as they are. Many thousands of lives, many millions of money would have been saved to this country, much honour and prosperity would have been its lot, instead of the distraction in which we now see ourselves involved.

You are to thank your ministers for having led you to the dishonour of refusing the reasonable and constitutional terms of accommodation offered by your colonies in the year 1775. That was the fatal æra which gave an inflexible obstinacy to the counsels of this nation, to require absolute and unconditional submission before you would treat. The present minister of the American department entered into his office, with the public avowal of these principles. All Europe was ransacked for mercenaries to impose unconditional submission upon your colonies. What then was there left for them to do, but to seek their safety in independence and foreign alliances. It was the ministry of this country which drove the Americans into foreign alliances, by the example of hiring foreign troops, and which reduced them to the alternative of unconditional submission or independence. In this dilemma they chose the latter; and in such a dilemma they should have made no other choice. If you would have conceded to them reasonable and constitutional terms of connexion, they did over and over again disavow every wish or claim of independence. It is the administration of this country who have forced them into independence; they now possess it, nor is it in your power to wrest it from them. Let it be remembered who drove their country to set the whole upon this desperate cast. By the advice of your ministers you set all prudent counsels at defiance, and by the folly of their conduct you have lost America.

We may have peace with America if we chuse it, but not upon the terms that we might have had it at the time when the petition from the Congress was rejected, nor even upon the terms that we might have had six months ago. The only rule that we seem to follow, is, to refuse the terms which may be had at the time, till it becomes too late, and then we see our folly. I myself told the administration in this very place before Christmas, that there was an opening to treat, by which they might have prevented the treaty between France and America. The conduct of the French court towards the Americans had been so deceitful and unsatisfactory, as gave the greatest disgust. I informed them that they might hit the blot, and take advantage of it. My words in this House were, *Do it before you sleep*. They slept and did it not. They prevailed upon the House to adjourn itself for two months, and the time was lost. If nothing less than independence will now do, you must thank the administration who have driven things to all extremities. You have tried the event of three campaigns, and have failed in all. You have lost an entire army, you have likewise lost your time to recruit and augment that which remains, and the most probable prospect for Sir William Howe's army, is, that they may share the same fate with that under General Burgoyne, unless you have the prudence to withdraw it in time.

I grieve to see that things are come to so desperate a pass; none of the measures which have brought us to it, had my concurrence or consent. I would have advised far others. At present there is no other advice left to be given, but to concede and to confirm that independence to America, which you have forced upon them. I know that you will not consent to this, and that all counsel is vain, but I know likewise that the time will come when you will think it a good bargain to make peace with America, simply upon the terms of independence. I would advise the repeal of the Canada act, but I know likewise that this will not be done; yet the time may come when this act may be repealed without your consent. Look to Canada, and perhaps to the Floridas. It might likewise be worth while to think of your West Indian islands. You have driven America into an alliance with the house of Bourbon. Look to the consequences.

For my own part I can only give the advice of a single and insignificant individual. I would seek the alliance and friendship of America. I would cement the two countries together by a mutual naturalization, in all rights and franchises

franchises to the fullest extent. We are derived from the same stock; we have the same religion, the same manners, the same language, the same temper, the same love of liberty and of independence; and if we must be seemingly divided, let there at least be an union in that partition. To those who might otherwise have a reluctance to the concession of American independence, let this serve as the more liberal equivalent, Give up freely the less generous claim of an irksome and sterile dominion, and put the padlock on the mind.

Sir, I have nothing farther to trouble the House with, but to return them my thanks for their great indulgence, in having given me a patient hearing. I will, with their permission, read to the committee the motions which I have to make, and in the order that I propose to offer them. They are as follow :

“ That it is the opinion of this committee, that the expence of prosecuting the American war for another campaign, in the year 1778, more especially if, in consequence thereof, this country should be involved in any foreign wars, added to the expences already incurred in the American war, may probably amount to a sum not less than between thirty and forty millions sterling, which must create an alarming increase of the principal and interest of the national debt, and must require many additional heavy and burdensome taxes, land taxes as well as other taxes, upon the British subjects to defray.

“ That it is the opinion of this committee, that the prosecution of the American war must be destructive of the navigation, trade, riches, and resources of this country, as well as of the lives of his Majesty's subjects, carrying our land and sea forces the distance of 3000 miles, and thereby laying us open to the insults or attack of any secret or insidious enemy to this country.

“ That it is the opinion of this committee, that among the various causes which may contribute to depress the national funds, or to embarrass the state of public credit, and to weaken the resources of this country, the hostile disunion and division of America against Great Britain must probably be more operative to such fatal effects, than the prosecution of any just and necessary war against a foreign enemy.

“ That it is the opinion of this committee, that it is unbecoming the wisdom and prudence of Parliament to proceed
“ any

“ any farther in the prosecution of this fruitless, expensive,
 “ and destructive American war.

“ That it is the opinion of this committee, that there is
 “ no reason to doubt the sufficiency of the powers of this
 “ country, or the most animated coercion of them, when dis-
 “ engaged from this fatal American war; and under the con-
 “ duct of a prudent and vigilant administration effectually to
 “ resent every insult, and to repel every attack, upon the ho-
 “ nour of his Majesty's crown, and upon the essential inte-
 “ rests of his kingdom, in the prosecution of any just and ne-
 “ cessary war, against a foreign enemy.

“ That an humble address be presented to his Majesty,
 “ that he will graciously be pleased to instruct the commis-
 “ sioners appointed to treat, consult, and agree upon the
 “ means of quieting the disorders now subsisting in certain of
 “ the colonies, plantations, and provinces of North America,
 “ to establish, as a fundamental, previous to any treaty, and
 “ from which they shall not have liberty to depart, that all
 “ persons, born either in Great Britain, Ireland, or the co-
 “ lonies, provinces, and plantations of North America, shall
 “ be considered as natural born subjects, and enjoy all rights
 “ and privileges as such, throughout all the said dominions in
 “ common, in the manner heretofore accustomed.”

Lord North.

Lord North objected to the motions in the gross as well as in detail. He could not agree to the first, from its being erroneously stated, as well as from its depending on probability, and its indefinite amount. A sum between 30 and 40 millions was very indefinite; but the error in the stating was the most considerable objection. The fact was, that the expence of the three last years was no more than 18,000,000*l.* or thereabouts, and the additions at the end of the campaign, would be 5,000,000*l.* This he said he could prove, by enumerating the addition to the national debt and other articles. The addition to the national debt was 13,000,000*l.* The increase of the land-tax was 500,000*l.* a year, that made it 14,000,000*l.* The increase of the navy debt was about a million and an half, that made it 16,000,000*l.* and the sum which we should have saved in case of peace, and which would have gone to pay off a part of the national debt, might be taken on an average at 900,000*l.* a year. So that the sum it has already cost us is no more than 18,700,000*l.* The unfunded debt for the present year will be no more than three millions, and the other out-goings altogether would make up no greater a sum than about twenty three million five hundred thousand pounds.

He

He adverted to the honourable gentleman's arguments on the last loan. The reason for his meaning to give the subscribers douceurs, at a time when the stocks had considerably decreased, was, that they might in future trust to the honour of Parliament. The first deposit had not been made, nor was there any compulsion upon them to make good their subscriptions. They would have been losers to have made it good, as the stocks then stood; and as Parliament must, sooner or later, have made good the deficiency, he thought it provident to give them a further advantage, which would have superseded the necessity of having the aid from Parliament next session, as well as brought future subscribers forward, by shewing that they dealt honourably with them.

He could not agree with the gentleman, that it would be good policy to keep five millions reserved in the Exchequer, while so heavy a load of debt hangs upon the nation. It might indeed be advantageous to have such a sum in reserve, as a nest-egg, when we went to market, or as a provision for a rainy day, when we could not go; but he considered it impossible to accomplish such an object in the present state of our finances.

He could not, from the most impartial review of his conduct, consider it as criminal. His heart must be excused, though his head might be to blame. With the best and wisest intention, an erroneous conduct might be joined. In a particular manner he justified the measure of the Quebec act. After the most serious deliberation on the nature of the people, he considered it most prudent and politic to give them the form of government they now enjoy. Not fitted to receive into their state an epitome of our original constitution, he formed a system partly of our own, and partly of the French government, merely as a preliminary to the introduction of a solid system, by a popular assembly. He thought that the civil law of France, to which they had originally belonged, joined to the criminal law of Britain, which is a greater security to the subject than that of the French, would jointly form a system, favourable as a preliminary, until a more regular one could be granted.

He concluded with moving for the chairman to leave the chair.

The question was then called to leave the chair, which was carried.

Lord

Lord Middleton.

Lord *Middleton* (according to order) reported from the committee of the whole House, to whom the first and second of the resolutions, which were yesterday reported from the committee of the whole House, to whom it was referred to take into consideration the several acts of Parliament relating to the trade and commerce of Ireland, were re-committed, the resolutions which the committee had directed him to report to the House; which he read in his place, and afterwards delivered in at the table, where the same were read, and are as followeth, *viz.*

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this committee, that all goods, wares, and merchandize, being the produce or manufacture of the kingdom of Ireland, or commodities of the growth, produce, or manufacture of Great Britain, legally imported into Ireland, or foreign certificate goods legally imported from Great Britain into Ireland, be permitted to be exported directly from the said kingdom, in British ships navigated according to law, to be imported into any of the British plantations, or to any of the settlements belonging to Great Britain on the coast of Africa, wool and woollen manufactures only excepted.

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this committee, that all goods, wares and merchandize, being the produce of any of the British plantations, or of any of the settlements belonging to Great Britain on the coast of Africa, be permitted to be exported from thence into the said kingdom of Ireland, tobacco only excepted.

Mr. Burke moved, that the resolution be recommitted to a committee of the whole house.

The subsequent resolution was agreed to by the House. The House resolved itself immediately into a committee, to consider of the first of the resolutions. Mr. Burke's amendment was agreed to; and the House being resumed, Lord Middleton reported the resolution as follows:

Resolved, That all goods, wares, and merchandize, being the produce or manufacture of the kingdom of Ireland, wool and woollen manufactures only excepted, or commodities of the growth, produce, or manufacture of Great Britain, legally imported into Ireland, or foreign certificate goods legally imported from Great Britain into Ireland, be permitted to be exported directly from the said kingdom in British ships navigated according to law, to be imported into any of the British plantations, or to any of the settlements belonging to Great Britain on the coast of Africa.

Sir

Sir *Cecil Wray*, on the second resolve, begged the House to proceed on so interesting a matter with the utmost caution. He thought it very imprudent to proceed in it at this late season of the year, when the House was very thin, and the kingdom could not be enough advertised of their proceedings. Were these propositions introduced into the committee merely to try the pulse of the nation, and to lie over in the form of resolutions to the next session, he would be most agreeable to that procedure, because thereby every one would have leisure to consider, and the House would be full to discuss the matter. Sir Cecil Wray.

Mr. *Connolly* said, though an Irishman, and much of his property lay in Ireland, it was not from mere local considerations that he lent his hand to the work: he was convinced that the advantages proposed by the bill for the Irish, would turn out in the end to the benefit of Great-Britain: as a member of the British empire, he did not deem it a matter of sufficient weight to prevent the bill from passing into a law, that a part of the kingdom might be a little injured, provided the general good of the whole was promoted by it. Mr. Connolly.

Mr. *Jenkinson* said, there would be good time, by the intervention of the holidays, to give the nation time to consider and start their objections to it. Mr. Jenkinson.

Lord *North* was of the same opinion; but hoped that no new propositions would be grafted upon it, but that it would pass in its present form. Lord North.

Sir *Cecil Wray* then declared, that as the *fiat* of the noble Lord had determined it to pass this session, he would take a decided part in the business, and steadily oppose it; and in this he hoped to be assisted by every independent member of the House. Sir Cecil Wray.

April 10.

Lord *North* presented to the House (according to order) a “ Bill for enabling his Majesty to settle on their royal highnesses the princes Frederick Bishop of Osnaburgh, William Henry, Edward, Ernest Augustus, Augustus Frederick, and Adolphus Frederick, an annuity of 60,000*l. per annum*; and also to settle on their royal highnesses the princesses Charlotte Augusta Matilda, Augusta Sophia, Elizabeth, Mary, and Sophia, one other annuity of 30,000*l. per annum*; and also to settle on his highness prince William Frederick one other annuity of 8000*l. per annum*, and on her highness the princess Sophia Matilda one other annuity of Lord North.

of 4000*l. per annum* ;” and the same was received, and read the first time, and ordered to be read a second time.

The bill having been once read, and Lord North proposing that it should be read a second time immediately, **Ld. Irnham.** Lord *Irnham* objected to the second reading of the bill on the same day it was first read. He thought that hurrying it through the House, was neither a mark of respect towards the Duke of Gloucester, nor towards the princes in the succession to the crown. That it would be bad policy as well as unjust, at such a time as this, to disinherit the issue of the princes of Brunswick and Orange, without going through the decent and legal forms of acknowledging and authenticating the marriage of his royal highness the Duke of Gloucester, in order to legitimate his children. And it became the more necessary, because the present ministers had occasioned so many reports of their doubts ; which, though they only meant as a cloak for persecution, and to prevent foreign courts from paying the Duchess of Gloucester proper respect, might be construed by the princes in the succession, to have arisen from the circumstances of the inquiry made by the privy council : and as they were going to recognize one marriage, he thought it would be proper to lay before the House the certificate and proofs by witness, of the marriage of their royal highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Cumberland.

Mr. Rigby. Mr. *Rigby* rose to ask if any man in the House or in the nation had any doubt of the legality of those marriages ? That he sat in the privy council at the time they were investigated—that he had no doubts, and did not wish to have a motion which could imply that there were any. He thought it a proper mark of respect towards the Duke of Gloucester, to read the bill a second time the same day.

Lord North. Lord *North* again moved the second reading of the bill, and said it was usual to hurry such bills as related to the royal family, in order to shew unanimity upon the question.

Mr. Wilkes. Mr. *Wilkes*. The very title of the bill, which the noble Lord with the blue ribband has just presented to the House, will give the truest pleasure to the friends of the protestant succession. A royal family, already so numerous, is an invaluable addition to the national strength and importance. Every Englishman, who is at heart anxious not only for the permanent, but the perpetual, preservation of our liberties in the august line of Brunswick, must now enjoy the highest satisfaction. The alarming fears, which our
ancestors

ancestors at various periods experienced, from a suspicion of the failure of succession to the imperial crown of these realms, are not likely to disturb their posterity. We live in happier times. The gratitude of this House to Heaven increases every year, with the fortunately prolific, annual increase of the royal offspring.* We triumph in those in-dearing pledges of our monarch's love, and the public felicity, which an all-bounteous Providence continues to bestow on this peculiarly favoured nation. The kingdom at large contemplate with rapture his Majesty's numerous, and still I hope, increasing progeny, as insuring even beyond our children's children, to the *nati natorum, et qui nascentur ab illis*, the blessings and glories of his reign. It is the duty of his faithful Commons here to do more, to provide for them in a manner adequate to their exalted birth and royal dignity.

The message, Sir, from the crown points out to us the provision, and the mode of it, which is desired. I give my hearty consent to the grant. It will be a grant worthy of the English nation, worthy of the great personages, in whom we have now so important an interest, and hereafter I trust we may claim a share of their future fame and glory. Yet, Sir, I regret, that it is not made a certain provision for them during his Majesty's life, and the Duke of Gloucester's, as well as during the life of the prince of Wales, or the successors of the reigning monarch. It is only to take effect after the demise of the crown. Sir, if I understand the bill in your hand, it compels the prince of Wales to grant out of the hereditary revenues of the crown the annual sum of 60,000l. to the King's sons, 30,000l. to his daughters, and 12,000 to the children of the Duke of Gloucester, during their respective lives, but no permanent provision is made for them during the present reign, or the life of the Duke of Gloucester. The bill effectually ties up the hands of the successor, but leaves the prince on the throne the option of any provision for the children and nephews of the

* In the same session, by the votes of Nov. 21, 1777, it appears that the House "resolved, that a congratulatory message be sent to the Queen, on the birth of another princess—to assure her Majesty, that this House will ever retain the truest sentiments of duty and attachment to a Queen—to whom this nation owes so many blessings."

crown during the life of his present Majesty, and his next brother. I desire to be set right, if I have mistated the bill, which has just been read to the House.

Lord North. Lord *North* then said, The honourable gentleman is certainly right. The King will not be obliged to make any provision by this bill for any part of the royal family, during his own life and that of the Duke of Gloucester." Mr. *Wilkes* then added,

Mr. Wilkes. I submit, Sir, to the House, that in this respect the bill is imperfect. The provision for the younger branches of the royal family is not an immediate certain provision, but to take effect at a future period. They are left at the present moment without the smallest fixed revenue or support, independent of the crown. The sovereign makes no grant. We are taking away, without his consent, during his minority, a part of the hereditary revenue of the prince of Wales, for the future maintenance of his brothers, sisters, and the more remote branches.

The example of this generosity is not given by the father and the sovereign to his first subject, although it comes in the mode of a paternal precept. We leave them now in a state of the most absolute dependence on the crown, on the caprice of the sovereign, or perhaps the mercy of the minister. The bill, therefore, in my opinion, ought to be extended to a settlement of the same revenues to take place immediately, and to be secured by the fullest parliamentary grants irrevocably. The strong ties of blood in the first degree must in this case coincide powerfully with the wishes of the people. I may surely, Sir, leave in all safety to the servants of the crown so acceptable a service to the best of princes and of parents.

A circumstance, Sir, of the utmost importance seems on this occasion to have been entirely neglected by ministers. It is remarkable that the children of his Majesty's next brother, the Duke of Gloucester, are recognized and provided for by this bill, before there has been a notification in any way to Parliament, or to the public, of his royal highness's marriage. I have not, Sir, the least doubt of the legality of that marriage, but I know that strong doubts have formerly been entertained, even by some of the present ministers. The noble Lord with the blue ribband is as ill informed on this subject as he has been all along respecting America, when he ventures to assert, that no man now has the

the least doubt remaining. In consequence of the general uncertainty in the minds of the nation a very few years ago, the privy council entered upon the enquiry of the legality of the Duke of Gloucester's marriage. They received evidence, which, it is reported, satisfied them; but as that evidence has never been communicated to either House of Parliament, a degree of scepticism I know has continued. I wish it removed. It will be undoubtedly, when Parliament shall be treated by ministers with respect, when the great council of the nation shall be furnished with the proofs, which flashed conviction on the minds of the privy council. The representatives of the people, Sir, have surely a right to examine into every thing respecting the succession to the imperial crown of these realms, because they, in conjunction with the other two branches of the legislature, have by an express * act of Parliament the power to make laws and statutes of sufficient force and validity to limit and bind the crown, and the descent, limitation, inheritance, and government thereof. The maintaining the contrary doctrine by writing or printing is declared a species of high treason, and whatever slavish positions of † hereditary,

* 6 Anne, ch. vii. s. 1.

† It is necessary sometimes to remind the tools of an arbitrary court, that there can be no right to the imperial crown of these realms but a parliamentary right. The mere hereditary right would be stronger in the house of Savoy, and even in that of Bourbon, than in the Brunswick Line. This will appear from the following short genealogical table.

1. Charles I.	1. James I.
2. Henrieta Maria, Duchess of Orleans.	2. Elizabeth, Electress Palatine, Queen of Bohemia.
3. Anna Maria, Duchess of Savoy, wife of Victor Amadeus II. protested 1700. House of Savoy.	3. Sophia, Electress of Brunswick.
4. Marie-Adelaide, Duchess of Burgundy, afterwards Dauphiness.	4. George I. House of Brunswick.
5. Louis XV. House of Bourbon.	

hereditary, divine, indefeasible right may be adopted in despotic countries, and by modern courtiers here, the people of England in general consider their crown as the free gift of the nation on their own terms and conditions†. We know that the crown is not in the gift of the reigning prince. He is only tenant for life, if he observes the original compact.

The people, Sir, in consequence, possess the right to be informed of whatever respects the succession. All we know as to the marriages of the King's brothers amounts to this, that they were private and clandestine, and that no proof of their legality has hitherto been given to the nation. The proofs of those marriages ought to be communicated to Parliament, while the parties are still alive, and the witnesses with us to be examined. The facts may now be ascertained with precision. If any doubts have been suggested in this age, they may be removed by those living witnesses, to whom no recourse can be had in succeeding times. I regret that there are so many historic doubts in our history.* Po-
sterity

If the Parliament had not changed the order of succession to the crown, the house of Savoy would have succeeded, for their right is derived from the daughter of Charles I. whereas the Brunswick line are descended from the daughter of James I. a degree more removed. The gift of the crown is in the Parliament, in the people by their representatives.

†. The first king of the house of Brunswick appeared to acknowledge this with gratitude, when he took for the motto of his coronation medal, *Volentes per populos*. The motto of the present King, *Patriæ ovanti*, was not so happily chosen. The ovation is described as the smaller triumph, of which the poor sacrifice was a sheep, *ovis*. It should seem almost prophetic of the American war, for Aulus Gellius tells us, "*ovandi, ac non triumphandi, causa est, quum aut bella non rite indicta, neque cum iusto hoste gesta sunt.*"

At the ovation a crown of myrtle, not of laurel, was used. The same learned Roman says, "*quod non Martius, sed quasi Venerius quidam triumphus foret.*" This too may seem prophetic of the present reign, and of the numerous royal progeny.

* Mr. Horace Walpole published in 1768, an excellent quarto, intituled, *Historic Doubts on the Life and Reign of King Richard the Third*. The intent of this speech seems to be the prevention of all historic doubts on the events of the reign of George the Third. Mr. Walpole says, page 40, "the doubts on the validity

sterity has this just claim on the present generation, that our fields may not be again deluged with the blood of a brave people in a fatal civil contest. Should the smallest degree of scepticism now exist, the progress of it, if not timely checked, is known to be rapid, and it will acquire strength even from the general destroyer, Time. The fullest light ought now to be thrown on a transaction hitherto covered with clouds and darkness.

This enquiry, Sir, I likewise consider as a point of national honour and justice to several foreign princes, who are allied by marriage to the crown of Great Britain. The house of Nassau, to whom we owe the restorer of our violated constitution, the king of Denmark, the princes of Brunswick and Hesse, and others of the protestant line, are actually in the parliamentary entail of the crown. They will think that we are proceeding in a very irregular manner, when we make settlements on the children of the King's next brother, as legal heirs of the crown after the children of the King, before the marriage of his royal highness has been publicly recognized.

Sir, in this bill I should have been happy if there had been a clause respecting her royal highness the Duchess of Gloucester, for whom no establishment is mentioned, altho' the bill contains a provision for her two children. The honour of the nation, and the splendor of the British crown, call upon us to proceed to ascertain an adequate provision, and for life, for the wives of the royal brothers. It would have naturally taken place in a bill of this nature, consecrated to the Brunswick line, the elected of Heaven, and the people, as the protectors of our liberties, if ministers had adopted the same liberality of sentiment, which pervades the nation. Is this Parliament doomed, Sir, to counteract the wishes of a whole kingdom? or is it meant to attempt the subjecting every branch of the royal family to the same servility, which has characterised the present majority in this House.

There is not, Sir, a private gentleman among us who has not painful ideas, from the precarious situation of the two

validity of Edward's marriage were better grounds for Richard's proceedings than aspersions of his mother's honour. On that invalidity he claimed the crown, and obtained it; and with such universal concurrence, that the nation was undoubtedly on his side."

royal

royal ducheſſes, almoſt unparalleled in any family of diſtinction. They have ſtill to expect, from the merited eſteem of the nation, an eſtabliſhment adequate to their high rank, and the additional luſtre it has received from their unexceptionable, I might ſay, exemplary conduct. I hope ſuch a proviſion will be made, and I am very happy that the worthy baronet [Sir James Lowther] near me has given the Houſe aſſurances of his moving it in Parliament, if it continues to be neglected by adminiſtration. The motion will come from him with weight and dignity, nor can there be a doubt of his generous endeavours being crowned with ſucceſs.

To facilitate, Sir, ſo important a buſineſs, the previous ſtep I have mentioned ſeems neceſſary. Every communication ought to be made to Parliament, which can elucidate a matter at preſent obſcure, that we may know the ſure grounds on which we proceed. We ſhall then be in poſſeſſion of thoſe clear proofs alluded to, without which I do not think we can with propriety enter upon that clauſe of the bill in your hand, Sir, which reſpects the deſcendants of the Duke of Glouceſter. I therefore hope, Sir, for the concurrence of the Houſe in a motion for “an humble and dutiful addreſs to the King, that his Majeſty would be graciouſly pleaſed to order the proofs of the marriages of their royal highneſſes the Dukes of Glouceſter and Cumberland, to be laid before this Houſe.”

Ld. Irnham. Lord *Irnham* ſeconded the motion. His Lordſhip ſaid, though on ſome perſonal conſiderations it muſt be diſagreeable to me to ſpeak on this bill, yet as it is not of a private nature, but concerns the honour and juſtice of the nation at large, I return thanks to the honourable member for his motion, and wiſh the marriages of their royal highneſſes the Dukes of Glouceſter and Cumberland to be fully inveſtigated, eſtabliſhed, and circumſtantially proved to the Parliament and the nation. The right honourable member [Mr. Rigby] ſays, “Who doubts the legality of the Duke of Glouceſter’s marriage?” Sir, I ſhould have been leſs ſurpriſed at hearing that ſpoken by any other member than one of the privy council, who muſt either fail in his memory, or agree with me, that reports prevailed that there were doubts of ſufficient proof being eſtabliſhed, before the Lord Chancellor, the Archbiſhop of Canterbury, and the Biſhop of London, ſent to Glouceſter houſe to examine into the marriage

marriage of his royal highness the Duke of Gloucester, by order of the privy council.

It was said, and it is now avowed in Parliament, that they neither found certificate nor any living evidence to prove the marriage. That upon the report to the privy council, the entry was made in the book "legally married;" but the privy council determined to leave the word *legally* out. Several occurrences followed, which tended to create doubts in men's minds, such as sending a message to Gloucester-house, upon the Duchess proving with child, to propose to them to be married again, and afterwards refusing to bury a child of the Duke of Gloucester's in Westminster abbey. These reports were propagated by the ministers. Is it therefore decent or parliamentary, that the same ministers, without first quieting the minds of his majesty's subjects, and laying the evil spirit which themselves had raised, should in a moment make Parliament decisively cut off the legal succession of the house of Hanover. I was not the person to doubt the marriage, and therefore I call for proofs to be laid before Parliament. I believe ministers acted in this insolent manner, in order to have a better pretence for insulting the Duchess of Gloucester, and to refuse her a maintenance. It likewise answered their purposes abroad, where the same ministers that now declare there never was a doubt of the Dukes' marriages, dared to represent to their ambassadors and envoys, that no such marriages were established in England.

My wishes are that our benevolence towards the royal family may be open, generous, and in a public spirited line, becoming the nation and the Parliament. But by concealment of facts, we may raise suspicions in the minds of those foreign princes included in the succession, whose alliance we now stand in need of, particularly the prince of Brunswick, who led our arms to victory last war, and ought always to be honoured and respected by Great Britain. The opinions of the privy council are liable to change frequently and wantonly—they have given us many recent proofs. I have no commands nor instructions from the Duke of Cumberland to assert it, but am sure he neither can nor ought to have an objection to laying the proofs of his marriage before Parliament. New ministers may create new doubts. Let the junto who raised such dangerous reports quiet men's minds, not simply by their proceedings in Parliament this

day, but by some public act to recognize both marriages if duly verified : and out of respect to the nation, if they have none for the princes of the blood, it must then be their duty to make a provision for the Dukes to enable them to support their wives, as well as to maintain their children. He insisted, that in full confidence of the sufficiency of the testimony upon these marriages, it would be to the honour and advantage of both Duchesses, that the facts in proof should be established by the proper national enquiry, which were the Houses of Parliament.

Mr. T.

Townshend.

Mr. T. *Townshend* wished the motion to be withdrawn, for fear it should widen the breach, instead of healing it. He wished to see all the branches of the royal family in affluence, suitable to their high station ; and that unanimity and brotherly affection might make them examples worthy of imitation. He was sure the noble Lord so nearly allied to Cumberland House meant well ; but feared that his seconding the motion would prove of bad consequence to the interest of the princes. He applauded highly the conduct of the Duke of Cumberland, in his attention and feeling behaviour towards Lord Chatham, on his Lordship's late sudden illness in the House of Lords. He thought both princes had virtues and spirit which might, through a reconciliation with the crown, be employed for the benefit of Great Britain : at the same time he professed himself, a sanguine and able friend to Gloucester House.

Mr. Wal.

Pole.

Mr. *Walpole* said, the name he bore, made him rise to express his astonishment that the legitimacy of the Duke of Gloucester's children should be doubted by any man. He did not accuse the noble Lord who seconded the motion : he thought on the contrary that his Lordship being fully satisfied, that proofs could be brought of the marriage of the Duke of Gloucester, ought from his connection to carry great weight, and hoped he would advise the honourable gentleman [Mr. Wilkes] to withdraw the motion.

Sir James
Lowther.

Sir *James Lowther* said, he was the person who moved an increase of income to the two royal Dukes last year, on account of their marriages ; which marriages, he was happy to hear so fully acknowledged by the ministers. That he recommended the most proper public act for acknowledging those marriages, by an immediate suitable provision for their royal Highnesses the Duchesses of Gloucester and Cumberland ; and if ministers did not move it, he would. He observed

ved, that something ought to have been done for the Duke of Cumberland, as well as for his brother ; but recommended to withdraw the motion for the present.

Mr. Wilkes withdrew his motion.*

Mr. *Powys* moved, that for the more effectually procuring a reconciliation between Great Britain and her colonies, it may be necessary to give further instructions to the commissioners who are to be appointed by his Majesty to go to America. Mr. *Powys*.

Mr. *Pultney* thought the motion injurious to the commissioners. A number of men had raised themselves in the colonies, from obscurity to grandeur, from poverty to riches, and from servitude to power ; they had the reins of their new government in their hands, which must be wrested from them ; it was reasonable to suppose, that they would insist upon it, and, if not overcome by the superior voice of the people, would preserve it. Such a resolution as that moved for, would give them the fairest argument to persuade the people, and independency must be the consequence. But he did not despair of the success of the commission. He believed the tone of the Americans, in general, was against independency. They had been in a manner forced into a measure, which they had not approved of, and it was even carried in the Congress by one or two voices. It was even reasonable, arguing from motives of interest, to suppose that they would prefer dependency, to independency. Secured from taxation ; relieved from the fear of having any share in the Mr. *Pultney*.

* Notwithstanding the importance of the business, it was hurried by administration thro' both Houses with extraordinary precipitation. Lord North delivered the message from the King on the 8th of April. A bill was ordered to be prepared and brought in on the same day. The bill appeared in the House on the 10th, (Friday) ; was read a first and second time, and committed. April 13, (Monday) the House resolved itself into the committee, went thro' the bill, received the report of the committee, and ordered the bill to be ingrossed. The bill was on April 14 read a third time, passed, and sent to the Lords. April 15, the Commons received a message from the Lords, by the Lord chief baron Skynner, and Mr. baron Hotham, that the Lords had agreed to the bill. On the 16th of April, the eighth day only after the message of the crown, the bill received the royal assent.

burthen of our debt; protected during war by our strength, and cultivated during peace by our arts—with these advantages joined to dependency, could they wish to be independent? It was not reasonable, that men, attentive to their interests, would forfeit security and protection, for danger and the chimerical notions of nominal grandeur. But it hurt him to hear a proposition urged in that House so destructive to the welfare of Britain. Would not the independency of America be the eve of their advancement into a flourishing naval power? Their situation commanding a species of superiority over all the earth, they would soon rival Europe in arts, as well as grandeur, and their power in particular would rear itself on the decay of ours. Are we then so lost to all the feelings of patriotism, that with a wanton hand we would lay the foundation stone of a blockade against our own existence? We were able yet to reduce America, if she should be unwise enough to refuse our offers. Efforts would then be made very different from the former. We had till then been engaged in a wrong cause; our ministers had been cruel, unjust, and unconstitutional in their demands, and the hearts of the people were not in the measures adopted. But now the injustice would change sides, and if they refused, they only would be the aggressors. In a war with justice on our side, what would not Britain perform? The national spirit was not extinct, and that was the bulwark of Britain. The state of the funds and finances had been introduced as reasons for evading a war. An enquiry into the internal opulence of this country would extinguish every fear of that kind. The aggregate riches of Britain were not less than a thousand millions. The national debt was only one hundred and forty-six millions; a seventh part of the wealth of the kingdom. How then could we be so distressed in our finances? In cases of national occasion, we should have reference to the fundamental property of the nation, and all Europe would wonder at our resources, and tremble at our power.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. Fox said, he had formed a decided opinion upon it, and if he should happen in his sentiments to differ from a venerable character, which he honoured and revered, they would give him credit that no early prejudice, no infant pique, directed his judgment, or influenced his mind. He had considered this matter, abstracted from every other object, and his judgment was formed upon logical, as well as natural

natural reasoning and deduction. The dependency of America he thought impossible, from our situation, as well as from the nature of the object, to regain. She had joined with France in an amicable and commercial treaty. The latter had recognized her independency, and they were both bound in gratitude to defend one another, against our resentment on the one hand, or our attempt to break it on the other. If by concession or coercion we attempted to recover the dependency of America, we had, the powers of France and America, and perhaps Spain, to encounter with. If we attempt to punish France for recognizing the independency of America, America joins her, and we have in either case two, if not three powers to combat with. It is probable, that the greatest part of Europe will join in the recognition. Gratitude on the one hand, and obligation on the other, will tie them in one bond, and we must experience the joint efforts of all, if we attack one. If, on the contrary, the committee agree to the motion, and recognize the independency of America, we shall be no longer bound to punish the European powers, who have already, or who may do the same: and we may probably secure a larger share of the commerce of the Americans, by a perpetual alliance on a foederal foundation, much more beneficial than a nominal dependence. He could not avoid, however, lamenting to hear that language at this day used in the House of Commons—that the Americans were not in general inclined to independence. Could any thing be more distant from probability? Had we not seen every proof exhibited to the contrary? Had not the provinces, one and all, entered into the most solemn bond not to depart from, or rescind their vote of independency; and had not even thousands of them, in the province of Carolina, as well as others, taken an oath before Heaven to maintain it? The Congress and the people were the same. Distinct opinions, party distractions, and disunited interests, had not been formed in America, with regard to the great point in which, by their unanimity, they have succeeded. He laughed to hear the contrary; but hoped sincerely that the honourable gentleman near him, (Governor Johnstone) and the other commissioners, had more solid grounds of dependence, and more rational hopes of success. He viewed the dependency of America as a matter of very little moment to any part of this country, other than the minister. He understood that the appointment of governors, and other officers by the crown, was an object of their contemplation, which they esteemed of consequence.

sequence. It was meant, he supposed, as an addition to the weight in the scale of government, and this circumstance deserved the most serious attention of the House. The three estates of Parliament can no longer be the security and defence of our constitution, than when they remain in an equipoise with regard to one another. If one preponderates, the executive over the legislative, or the legislative over the executive, the superstructure must fall. It was a melancholy, but a certain truth, that the power of the executive had been gradually exerting itself to a predominancy for some years past, and its growth was already threatening to our constitutional existence. The further advantage that would be thrown into the scale, by the weight of America, would give maturity to its growth, and perpetual dominion to it over the legislative; because, by the exemption from taxation, no degree of weight whatever was added to the legislative state. Taxes are so far necessary to our constitution, as that they engage the people narrowly to watch and resist the influence of the crown. Their lives and properties can only be in danger if the crown becomes despotic. A security against that danger destroys their fears; and not being concerned in the advancement or depression of the crown, they do not regard its progress. Good God! then, could Britons awake, and, sensible of the danger arising from the predominancy of the executive power, wilfully throw so great an addition of strength into it, as the power of appointing the officers to the government of America must necessarily create? Had we not appointments, douceurs, sinecures, pensions, titles, baubles and secret-service money enough already? Did not the creatures of government swarm in every department, and must we add to their number? He could not see that American independency would so soon rise as the honourable gentleman imagined, to maritime pre-eminence. They could have no inducement to hunt for territory abroad, when the extent they possessed quietly would be more than they could occupy and cultivate. They would find no advantages of conquest equal to those of agriculture; and remembering that man, in his nature, has a predilection for the enjoyment of landed property, they would find it impossible, in a country where land was to be had for nothing, to propagate a spirit of manufacture and commerce. Every American, more or less, would become the tiller and planter, and the country might, in some future and distant period, be the *Arcadia*, but it could never be the *Britain* of the world. He reverted to the arguments of

of the honourable gentleman near him, in regard to the finances of this country. He never was more surprized than to hear a man of sense, of reading and argument, introduce a puerility. The internal opulence of the country might be introduced as a figure of shew, to delude the ignorant into an extravagant idea of our resources; but men must know that it was a mere delusion. If we are reduced to such an emergency as to have reference to the fundamental opulence, so may our enemy; and comparing the one resource with the other, we must acknowledge that theirs, in that respect, is treble to our own. Our natural resources, he knew, were superior to those of our enemy, in proportion to the extent of country; but we ought to remember, that theirs were capable of more improvements without hurting the people than ours. Would the ministers abolish the extravagant method of collecting their revenues, the voluptuous manner of expending them, and the enormous extent of the royal expenditure, what a superiority, in point of revenue, might they not effect? He condemned the conciliatory act as totally inadequate to the object, and declared, that if it produced any good end he should attribute it solely to the influence of the honourable and worthy gentleman (Governor Johnstone) who was last joined in the commission. He hoped the committee would consider seriously of the matter before them; there had been enough of treasure wasted in vain; and that they might not waste more on a fruitless inadequate commission, he begged them to extend the powers, and secure the success. He could not avoid, he said, adverting to the conduct of the ministry, in regard to the French *aggression*. He knew not from whence the word came, but he supposed it meant *insult*. He and others were termed pusillanimous, because they attempted to storm the torrent of rage and bravery, that rushed from the bosoms of the ministry on that occasion—they were called pusillanimous, because they were calm; but could they not now, with double energy, reverberate the term on those men who had confessed the nation was insulted; who had made the King and the Parliament of England confess that they were insulted; and who, for a whole month, had pocketed the insult, without preparing to punish it, or taking a single step for the defence of the nation? His noble friend, who had been termed pusillanimous, for advising the ministry to abate their rage, though he would not, by a previous conduct, have brought the nation to a necessity of declaring that

that they were insulted ; having once brought them so, he would instantly have revenged the insult.

He begged the committee to observe, that the ministry, conscious of their own inability, were obliged, when they wanted service to be performed, to call to their assistance the very men who had condemned their measures, and who had uniformly despised them. If a peace was to be negotiated, or a war to be undertaken, (meaning the appointment of Governor Johnstone in the one case, and Admiral Keppel and Lord Amherst in the other) they were obliged to employ the men on his side of the House.

Governor
Johnstone.

Governor *Johnstone* doubted, whether it might not be thought imprudent for him to speak at all in the present predicament, in which he stood ; but however, that he never should withhold his opinion ; he said it would be presumptuous, and if so folly in him to say that the business of the commission would succeed. But he thought that he saw so many reasons for thinking so, that he was free to undertake it. It was an experiment to be tried : and that he would undertake it on the ground, which the late conciliatory acts had laid : It might be an odd and singular thing to say, but he declared freely, that he did not desire his instructions to be extended nor enlarged ; especially on the point of independency. He looked upon the establishing of the independency of America, as entailing ruin upon this country.

There were indeed some preliminary matters which he thought still remained to be settled as absolutely necessary to the success of the negotiation of the commissioners.

The first was the repealing of the declaratory law : which was downright nonsense, as it now stood in our statute books, after the repeals we have already made. The other was the repeal of the Canada act. He said when these obstacles were removed as well as those, to the removal of which we already conceded, the Americans could have nothing else to ask. When they had absolute security in the possession of all their rights, what could they wish more ? Ask any dispassionate man, or any indifferent power upon the earth, ought they or ought they not, to close with us on the concessions which we offer ?

Most certainly they ought. While indeed we denied them any rights which they were undoubtedly entitled to ; while we with the hand of power, restrained them in the exercise of those which we even allowed they had ; while we made an unjust, cruel, foolish and abominable war against them ; they were united in their opposition and resistance to us ;
and

and Britain was divided. Half Britain then was opposed to all America. But now that we offer them such terms as they ought to be contented with and to accept, their resistance, if they refuse *then*, will become *positive rebellion*, and our war will become a *just one*. It will then be all Britain against half America. On this ground of independency America is greatly divided. Whatever the people in power may wish and aim at, the great body of the people do not wish to change the government of Britain, for that of the Congress. The people of the old settled interest and property do not wish for independency, they rather dread it.

Under this state of things; and my information, which I will trust and stand by, tells me that this is the state of things; I do not despair of the success of the commission with the powers it has at present. At least it will bear experiment worth the trial. If they are not actually divided in their measures, they are yet so unsettled in their opinion, that we ought to try *whether they will be divided*.

But even supposing that the acknowledging the independency of America should become a right measure, I doubt whether this House could declare them independent. Can this House take upon it to dismember the empire? I say it cannot.

Although I can never agree to the idea of the independency of America, in the sense that gentlemen in this House have taken it up; yet I would not be thought to entertain a hope of a dependence, such as others expect. Something perhaps of an union between two unequal parties, on terms suited to the condition of each, may be had with America. Yet, if they think that France has really and sincerely assisted and supported them, and if they have made a reciprocal treaty with France, it cannot be expected, I would not wish it nor attempt it, that they should make peace with us without including France in the same. But if France has chicaned them, and by false pretences, without really assisting them, has drawn them into all the miseries and distresses they suffer, and if one can persuade and convince them of that, they ought to thank us for getting them out of their hands, and to conclude a peace with us without thinking of those false friends.

Mr. Dundas (Lord Advocate) said the power of Britain, Mr. Dundas was sufficient to check France and recover America; and therefore if America would not accept of the terms now offered, he would offer no other.

Mr. T. *Townshend* thought the motion premature, and moved for the chairman leaving the chair.

Lord *North*. Lord *North* was against making any further concessions. He said he had reason to believe the treaty with France was not ratified by the Congress; and as it was certain that France had all along cajoled and abused them, they were not under obligation to give them either assistance or preference. He believed still that the minds of the people at large were inclined to conciliation, and he trusted that the measures already adopted would finally effect it. He reverted to the expression of the honourable gentleman [Mr. Fox] that he was obliged to repair to those who despised him, when he wanted service or advice. He declared that it was his invariable pursuit to seek for capable men, without regard to their situations or political opinions. As to a war with France he thought it *unavoidable*; at least, *very probable*.

Mr. *Dunning*. Mr. *Dunning* was against the motion. There was no limit in it, he said, nor could it be construed to what it extended. He wished to preserve the dependency of America.

Sir *George Savile*. Sir *George Savile* said we had been at law with America, that America had gained the trial, and would demand *costs*.

The chairman left the chair and there was no division.

Adjourned to April 13.

April 13.

Sir *P. J. Clerke*. Sir *Philip Jennings Clerke* began, by saying, he should not make any long preface to this motion, as its own merit would be a better advocate, and he trusted it would be such as would recommend it to every part of the House.

The people of this country, he said, in all dangers and difficulties, were accustomed to look up to Parliament for protection. Our ancestors had maintained many glorious struggles to obtain Parliaments; and our brethren in America had profusely lavished away their blood to procure a Parliamentary representation. When King William delivered this country from the tyranny and oppression of the Stewarts, the first thing he did, was to promise a Parliament; but one word was also added—it was *free*; without which it would have been of no value. He not only granted a *free* Parliament, but many acts passed in that reign to preserve and keep them *independent*. All commissioners of customs, excise, salt duties, &c. as being concerned in public money, were excluded from sitting as members in the House. He desired those acts might be read. Being read accordingly, he then said, that a new species of placemen had arose since that time, more dangerous to the constitution,

tion, and more prejudicial to the interest of the people, than any of these excluded by those acts. These were people who held many lucrative and beneficial contracts under the government. He wished to avoid personalities as much as possible, but he could not help taking some notice of the gold contract. The noble lord in the blue ribbon had said, that two and a half per cent. had been given originally on that contract; but finding some time after, that it extended itself farther than was first expected, he lowered the bargain to one and a half per cent. If then it would bear a deduction of one per cent. it must appear to the conviction of every man, that two per cent. would have afforded a sufficient profit on the first bargain. He said, he shewed the agreement to a great merchant in the city of London, and he produced and read his opinion, which was, that at computing the whole at the average price of two per cent. the profit amounted to 46,000*l*. That the usual and established commission among merchants, for remitting money, even in small sums, was no more than half per cent. which on the sum remitted would amount to 11,500*l*. so that 34,500*l*. had been given more than the accustomed price. He could name many other instances, he said, where very disadvantageous bargains had been made for the public; but his remark, on the whole, was, that members of Parliament would not be contractors, if extraordinary and improper advantages were not given them.

We should not hear, he said, a member rise up, and assure the House, he sold his coals as cheap as any merchant in London: another would not engage to furnish coals; or another not engage to provide shoes. He never heard that there were any taylor's or shoe-makers in that House. It was impossible, he said, not to perceive, that giving these contracts to members was an arrant job, and did create a dangerous influence in that House, which must operate much to the injury of the nation, for the more money was raised on the public the greater was the profit to these gentlemen: they throve upon the spoil of their fellow subjects. America would not submit to be taxed by the Parliament of England, because the more money she levied upon them, the more she exonerated her own burden. We seem to be something in their situation; the more money these gentlemen vote to be raised, the greater will be their profit: to grant away the money of others to enrich themselves, was improper. Many more arguments might be offered in support of the motion, but I will only observe, that from a

series of mismanagement, the situation of this country is become very *critical* and *perilous*.

We are at the edge of a precipice, and, without more public virtue, and better conduct, we must inevitably sink. The very being of this country was hazarded, and unless a total alteration of men and measures took place, we were devoted to every species of calamity and ruin, slavery itself, perhaps, not excepted.

The motion I shall make you is this, viz.

“That leave be given to bring in a bill for restraining any person, being a member of the House of Commons, from being concerned himself, or any person in trust for him, in any contract made by the commissioners of His Majesty’s treasury, the commissioners of the navy, the board of ordnance, or by any other person or persons, for the public service, unless the said contract shall be made at a public bidding.”

Sir George
Yonge.

Sir George Yonge seconded the motion, and said it was full time that the House should take the expenditure of the public money, and the several modes of corruption, devised to seduce members from their duty, into consideration.

Sir Joseph
Mawbey.

Sir Joseph Mawbey was severe upon the contractors in general; and particularly such of them as had seats in that House.

Mr. Harley.

Mr. Harley said, he wished that the contracts were strictly enquired into, as he was conscious that, upon the most rigid and scrupulous investigation, *his* would bear the test. Said, he had been all along consistent, both before and since the war; that he had always supported government upon principle; and had even risked his person and life in support of government. He therefore differed widely from the sentiments of the three worthy baronets who spoke before him; for he could solemnly affirm, his vote in Parliament was never influenced by any other consideration but the mere merit of the several questions as they arose.

Mr. Turner.

Mr. Turner said, the present question would prove the test of ministers, and their friends in that House; for it steered a middle path. It did not merely exclude contractors for being contractors in a fair, open, equitable manner; but for being closet contractors, for being private plunderers; for entering into a conspiracy with a corrupt administration to plunder their country; and either share the spoil with the rest of the public conspirators, or with some others more remote from the public eye, and from national observation,

Mr.

Mr. *A. Bacon* said, he was a merchant, and had honestly served an apprenticeship for seven long years to an eminent merchant; and when he had contracts, he fulfilled them fairly and honestly. Said, he had often voted against ministers, and voted for the repeal of the stamp act; he could not conceive why contractors should be treated in so unbecoming, nay, contemptuous a manner—as if they were monsters, and not fit for human society!

Sir *Cecil Wray* said, he always disliked private contracts. The present motion was not against the persons or characters of contractors, but to prevent the foul deeds imputed to ministers, and men supposed to be leagued together to rob the public. The minister, if he considered properly his own interest, reputation, and personal satisfaction, ought to support the present motion. Those who wished to contract, on the other hand, would be relieved from all that obloquy, which necessarily follows the present mode of serving the public, in a private manner.

Colonel *Barré* said, contracts ought to be open, and offered to the highest bidder. The gentlemen rise one by one, and say, “I am not influenced; I have voted sometimes one way, sometimes another.” This, however must be taken upon the bare credit of the honourable gentlemen. I have indeed observed, that gentlemen of this description, when bills for laying duties on ships going out or coming into harbours, or to build or repair piers, or for passing light-houses, sometimes differ from administration, but upon no other, that I can recollect, during a very long knowledge of this House.

The colonel next observed, that he remembered a gentleman in that House who rose in a very haughty tone, avowed his independence; yet, upon further enquiry, he discovered that this same independent gentleman turned out to be in possession of a private contract, which brought him in thirty thousand pounds a year. He owned he suspected it at the time; and it was that suspicion led him to the discovery of the fact. Said, he was himself a contractor with the public; and was actually entered into a contract with twenty persons; (*) said, he did not know how he should get out of it, or rather, how he should die in it; not for fear of any personal violence, but how he should get his dinner. He

* The select committee for enquiring into the expenditure of the public money.

then made several severe allusions to contracts and contractors—said, the public money had been shamefully and traitterously lavished. He said, suppose a minister, during the recess of the treasury board, should send for a contractor, and give him a large contract, in which the nation was to be plundered of thirty or forty thousand pounds, or more; and suppose the treasury board should meet after the said recess; and that after this closet arrangement the minister should, through neglect, forget, or purposely omit, to mention a syllable of this closet contract—suppose, I say, not a single *iota* of the contract should be mentioned; surely this must be a private contract with a witness; and the minister must be entitled to the public thanks of his country.

Lord North. Lord North replied, that the facts alluded to by the honourable gentleman, would come before the House properly authenticated, from the select committee. He therefore wished gentlemen would suspend their opinions till the whole matter came properly before the House. He said, if he had made any contracts, he made them for the public benefit; and if they had turned out otherwise, it was not his fault; at least, whatever he had done, he did for the best. He seemed to disapprove of the motion.

Lord G. Gordon. Lord George Gordon said, that he was sorry to differ in opinion with the noble contractor in the blue ribband, the right honourable privy counsellor contractor, and the rest of the honourable contractors on the other side the House, who had delivered their sentiments in opposition to the motion. He took the liberty of rising to declare his hearty concurrence with the very respectable and eloquent members near him, who, with so much power and persuasion, had delivered to the House unanswerable arguments for giving their assent to bring in the bill.

That, having mentioned the noble lord as the head of the contractors, he would take the liberty of instancing one example of it in very few words to the House.

He said, that noble lord was the greatest of all contractors; he was a contractor for men; a contractor for your flock, Mr. Speaker, [addressing himself to the chair] a contractor for the representatives of the people; that noble lord proposed to give a place of a thousand a year, provided a noble Duke would prevail on the most insignificant member in that House to vacate his seat in Parliament.

The noble Duke behaved like a man upon the occasion; like a friend, like a brother; he rejected the villainous proposition that noble Lord had the assurance to make.

He

He then told the House, he was not acquainted with the noble Lord; he had never spoke to him; he had never the honour of being introduced to him; but he sincerely wished him to save his country and his own life; desired him to call off his butchers and ravagers from the colonies; to retire with the rest of his Majesty's evil advisers from the public government, and make way for honest and wiser counsellors; to turn from his wickedness and live; it was not yet too late to repent; the public clamour for revenge was not yet raised against him; his Majesty's troops were not yet totally defeated in America.

After thanking the House for their attention, he said he would not trespass any longer at that time on their kind indulgence.

Lord *North* denied that the proposition the noble Lord had alluded to was a villainous proposition; and objected to the word villainous, as highly unparliamentary and improper.

Lord *George Gordon* replied, that he retracted the epithet villainous, as an unparliamentary expression; but defied the noble Lord, or any man, to deny the veracity of what he had related, and left it to the breast of every member in the House to apply an epithet more suitable to a treaty of that nature, with brother for brother.

The question was called for and the House divided; for the motion 71, against it 50.

April 14.

In the committee on the bill for, recruiting his Majesty's land forces and marines,

Mr. *Turner* observed, that the act of impressing was so contrary to the system of our liberty, that he could not see an expedient brought into Parliament answering to that end, without at least rendering it as easy as possible to the subject. He wished to see no one man pressed into the service who was useful to society; and he was convinced, that among men of another description enough might be found to satisfy the emergency of the times. Smugglers, for instance, were a set of men injurious to the community, and therefore he moved, that all men detected in smuggling any prohibited commodity, to a less amount than forty pounds, should be impressed, in lieu of any other punishment or penalty that the law had provided. This amendment passed.

Sir *Cecil Wray* moved, that the clause obliging such as might be discharged by an appeal, to pay sixpence for each day of their detention, should be expunged, and in place thereof that each man discharged as an improper object, should

should receive one shilling for each day of his detention—
This also passed.

Mr. Turner.

Mr. *Turner* moved, that the clause protecting disorderly men from the power of the act, who had a vote for a representative in Parliament, should be totally expunged; but the House was against that amendment.

The bill went through the committee and was ordered to be reported.

Sir George Savile.

Sir *George Savile* moved for leave to bring in a bill, to repeal the Quebec act; upon the ground of its being odious and inimical to the Americans, and consequently an obstacle to our attempts to make an accommodation with them.

Mr. Foliffe.

Mr. *Foliffe* said there was no foundation for such an apprehension. The act was not complained of—no evidence had been offered at the bar to prove the bill inexpedient, nor had he heard an argument offered in favour of the repeal.

Mr. Fielde.

Mr. *Fielde* asked, if there was no argument in the opinion of Governor Johnstone, one of the commissioners?

Sir George Howard.

Sir *George Howard* said there were but two circumstances which he thought could deprive us of Canada: The repealing this bill, and recalling Sir Guy Carleton, who knew the temper of the people so well. Upon General Carleton's authority he said he thought the repeal of the act now would be dangerous.

Mr. T. Townshend.

Mr. *T. Townshend* spoke highly of Sir Guy Carleton's military abilities, but said he was before mistaken in the opinion which he delivered at the bar, relative to the disposition of the people in that province: therefore his authority in this particular, was not to be wholly relied on. He contended, that not only this constitution had been violated in that act, but also that of the Canadians; for they had enjoyed the benefits of a British government for some years prior to the act, and Parliament erred egregiously, when it presumed to abrogate the liberties of a British government. To say that the people desired it, was a downright absurdity; for what people who, like them, had ever tasted the sweets of our constitutional freedom, would think of flying back to an aristocratic government, where an assembly or council of little noblesse had a legislative authority over them?

The House divided; for the motion, 54, against it, 96.

April 15.

Sir Grey Cooper.

The House in committee of supply, Sir *Grey Cooper* moved, that the sum of 56,680*l.* be granted to discharge the pensions allowed by government to those persons who had suffered losses

ses in America, on account of their loyalty to his Majesty.

Colonel *Barré* then moved, that the list of those persons, Col. *Barré*. with the respective pensions assigned them, should be laid before the House.

Lord *North* urged the impropriety of exposing such persons Lord *North*. to the resentment of their countrymen ; which would necessarily be the case, if the list then moved for were to be laid on the table ; but he declared his readiness to submit it to the inspection of any member who privately desired to see it.

Colonel *Barré* said this proposal was unparliamentary, and Col. *Barré*. tended to bring personal odium on the enquiring party. The sum voted last year for the same purpose was 30,000l. It was now encreased 26,000l. and upon no other authority than the word of the minister, with respect to the necessity or application of so large a sum. Much had been lost in the contest by some espousers of government. Much had been gained by other partizans of their cause ; it was a pity the gainers were not obliged to support the losers. The noble Lord at the head of administration had acquired some advantages ; his countenance had all the characters of humanity in it. He surely might provide for a few of them. Another noble Lord on the treasury bench near him, (Lord *Westcote*) though with a countenance not quite so bountiful, possessed perhaps as generous and humane a heart. He could, no doubt, provide for a few. And a third right honourable member in his eye, [Mr. *Rigby*] who had a harvest of plenty in his face, might reasonably be expected to take care of a few more : to enable him to do this, he enjoyed the lucrative post of pay-master of the forces, with several snug sinecures, some that were known to the public, and many that were unknown.

Lord *Frederick Campbell* complained of the partiality in Lord *Fred.* which provision was made for the sufferers in this contest ; *Campbell*. particularly instancing the treatment of a noble relation of his own, who had lost a considerable fortune, and his applications for a provision had been totally neglected by administration.

Lord *Westcote* declared that the pensions given by the trea- Lord *West-* sury on this account, were not as a compensation for the los- *cote*. ses suffered, but merely as a subsistence for the parties, till something more effectual could be done for them. The noble Lord alluded to would no doubt be considered as soon as we were in a situation to make compensation for the losses

which had been incurred by individuals in supporting the interests and authority of this country.

He expatiated on the great care which the treasury bench had taken in allotting those pensions; a business which they pursued with such attention, that they sometimes lost their dinners by it, and often were obliged to make short meals, whilst they were investigating the merits of the several claimants.

Mr. T.
Townshend.

Mr. *T. Townshend* observed, that short as the meals were which the treasury lords had taken upon this business, they had contrived to make a very large *reckoning*, for the nation to pay; and it seemed as if the people would be better satisfied, that their Lordships had held most sumptuous private *feasts* at their own houses, than such expensive public *fasts* at the treasury board.

Mr. *Turner.*

Mr. *Turner* advised the colonel to withdraw his motion, and not to take the sense of a majority upon a question for the granting of money, when he was convinced that they were of a description which rendered them in fact, though not in form, incompetent to the duty of voting the public money.

Col. *Barré.*

Colonel *Barré* passed some encomiums on the observation of the honourable gentleman, declared, upon his honour, he thought him right; and withdrew the motion.

Mr. *Fielde.*

Mr. *Fielde* delivered his sentiments, shortly against the confidence placed in the sole word of a minister, on the application of so large a sum.

Mr. *Burke.*

And Mr. *Burke* spoke a few words at the end of the debate, supporting Colonel *Barré's* hint, "that those who had gained so largely by this war, should assist those who had been losers by it."

April 16.

Bills passed. Adjourned to the 29th.

April 29 and 30.

No debate.

May 1.

Bill presented to exclude contractors from sitting in the House of commons and read. Moved, to be read a second time on the 4th. The House divided, for the question 72, against it 61.

Adjourned to May 4.

May 4.

Mr. *Burke.*

A petition being presented from the manufacturers of Somersetshire against the bill for permitting the importation of sail-cloth from Ireland, Mr. *Burke* observed, that it was

he who through mistake moved for leave to bring in the bill, though, upon enquiry, he since discovered, that such a law is already in being. If the bill was to be productive of the consequences stated in the petition, it was a little extraordinary the petitioners forgot to complain when they were hurt; and now feel so strongly, when there is not even a possibility of sustaining any injury. From this he inferred, that the jealousy entertained of the other Irish bills was equally ill-founded, and only originated in gross prejudice, or the selfish views of a few interested individuals. The petition was ordered to lie upon the table.

Order for second reading the contractors bill.

Earl *Nugent* objected to reading the bill, upon two grounds. Earl *Nugent*. The bill appointed, that all contracts in which members or their agents were concerned, should be purchased by auction, and yet government were not bound by it to accept the offer of the lowest bidder, therefore he thought the act would be nugatory. Contracts had been in usage for many years, and were considered by the wisest administration, as the wisest way of serving the public, and it was therefore unfair that members of that House should be excluded from their share in a fair mercantile practice, till it had been proved upon them that they had made an unworthy use of the indulgence. A committee was now sitting, employed in the examination of the contracts now in existence. It would be prejudging the contractors, to do any thing against them before the report from that committee was made. He could not suppose that contracts created any undue influence in the House, more than sinecure places, (which by the bye, he supposed no man on either side of the House would agree to exclude) and the legislature, by tolerating the latter, had determined it to be no prejudice.

Sir Philip Jennings Clerke said, the noble Lord had very justly stated the grounds and principle of the bill, which was to prevent any undue influence in that House by members holding beneficial contracts under government, and also to guard against an improper lavish expenditure of the public money. If the conduct of the majority of that House for the two preceding years was adverted to, there would appear to be too much reason to apprehend, that some improper influence had prevailed; how else could it be accounted for, that a great number of gentlemen, should uniformly pursue measures of force and violence, should declare they would never consent to a peace with America while there was a ship that could swim, or a soldier carry a musquet? Others de-

clare they would bring them on their knees; others talk of starvation; and every one of those gentlemen, above two hundred, in one morning, in one half hour, all change their opinions, confess themselves to have been in an error, and all adopt a new conduct, and submit to become suppliants for that favour which, when they had the power, they with so much haughtiness refused to grant. Such a versatility of conduct could not possibly be ascribed to a sudden general conviction; no man with a grain of sense could imagine it was. When it has been already proved, he said, that one man got more than thirty five thousand pounds above the ordinary profit on one contract, it was unnecessary to say that an ill use had been made of the public money. The noble Lord in the blue ribbon, he said, had declared in the House, that he did not wish to see contracts given to members of Parliament; but his words and actions had not corresponded, as he had shewn an extraordinary avidity to get contracts into his hands, particularly one of hiring ships; when he had stepped out of his own department into that of the navy board, which was somewhat hurtful to the public, as the business had been always carried on there in the manner now proposed by this bill, by public bidding, and no complaint had ever been made. The noble Lord told this House, (on this affair being mentioned) that the navy board had excused themselves from this contract, as being too full of business; it was true they did refuse it; it was put to them in a way to insure their refusal; the noble Lord wished them to refuse it, and put the question to them as an old man puts a question to a fine woman, in making her to say yes, and wishing nothing so much as to have her say no. The noble Lord's wishes prevailed; and how did it answer to the public? Why, one of these ships carried out to America one hundred wheel-barrows, one smith's forge, and a pair of bellows, for which the nation paid thirteen hundred and odd pounds.

The object of the bill, he said, was to take care that the public should not be defrauded out of that money which they so liberally granted to defend the nation, and he could not conceive that any member of that House could be so regardless of the interest of his constituents, as to say they should be.

He thought, therefore, there would be very little opposition to the bill, and that for the honour and credit of the House, it would then pass into a law.

Sir

Sir *Edward Astley* observed to the noble Lord, [Lord Nugent] that though he might call it prejudging the contractors to enter on the business before the House then, till the report from the select committee was made, he assured him, as he was one he said of that committee, that the report would sufficiently prove the necessity and propriety of the bill. He said the noble Lord had thrown out a kind of reflection on the House at large, by saying they would not wish on either side to preclude pensioners and placemen from seats. He declared he, for his own part wished such a motion was made, as he would be happy (happy in the happiness of the kingdom) if every placeman and pensioner was shut out, and he would zealously espouse such a motion.

Mr. *Wombwell* objected to the motion, because he believed putting up contracts to sale, would be prejudicial to the public service. Men inadequate to the accomplishment of the contracts, would at all times bid lower than men of ability and reputation, and they would do much more injury by serving the public badly, than the difference of expence. He had seen instances of it in the contracts of the East India company, and those of so fatal a nature, that he could not agree to the motion. Gentlemen unacquainted with business, and of little consequence in the eye of the public, might move for reformatations in every department of government.

[Here Mr. *Townshend* called him to order, and said, a gentlemen, rises in his seat, who holds a contract himself from government, and in the assembly of the nation, dares to call the mover of a question, one of the most independent members of the House, a man of no consequence. He would give that honourable gentleman to understand that the gentleman referred to, in better times than the present, merited a seat in that House, while he ought to stand at the bar.]

Mr. *Wombwell* to explain. He explained his own contract to the House.

Earl *Nugent* observed, that the honourable gentleman had meant no affront by the expression. The House would remember he was a merchant, and a man of no consequence was a mercantile phrase, and meant no more than a man unknown upon 'change. [This created a laugh.]

Mr. *Byng* observed, that the crowded appearance of the House, no doubt, gave the minister ground for hope, that he should not be again defeated in this favourite point. He knew what arts had been used to collect the gentlemen. The treasury letters had been circulated upon this occasion

sion with rather too much notoriety; even the hour, of appointment had come to the ears of people not called on the occasion. it was cautiously done, however, to mention the hour, that he might not again, if he chose to oppose numbers for want of argument to the question, be worsted. He hoped, however, the bill would immediately pass into a law.

Lord George
Gordon.

Lord *George Gordon*. I rise to declare my happiness in concurring with the very respectable baronet on the floor, who with a laudable zeal for the credit of the House, has this day committed to our consideration the commitment of the contractors bill. It meets with my hearty approbation, as being one of the many steps absolutely necessary to be taken towards regaining the confidence, and respect of the people to the privileges of Parliament.

I confess, at the same time, it is an Herculean labour the hon. member has undertaken? for I think the cleansing king Augeas's stable from filth and dirt of three thousand oxen, for the space of thirty-nine years, in the course of a day, was a mere play and pastime, compared to the arduous task of restoring this House to its ancient, and original purity!

Though the honourable baronet is not quite so strong as Hercules, he is supported in his endeavour of to-day by truth, justice, and good policy: which, added to his own abilities, with that great respect which every member in this House, as well as his countrymen at large, entertain for his intentions to promote the welfare of the public, will, I hope, induce a very great majority to approve his present proposition.

Sir, this dunghill of contracts has given an ill air to our whole proceedings! It has got wind abroad, and proves very offensive to the public nostrils; our constituents begin to smell a rat; they nose us in the lobby, and call us; (with more truth, I am afraid, than politeness) taylors and shoemakers; colliers and cabbage-salters, potatoe-forestallers, four-cROUT-makers, and swine contractors. Our mace is tarnished with this dunghill; our authority choaked; and the dignity, reputation, and the fair name of the Commons is smothered, and sinking in porter and salted-cabbage, shoes, four-cROUT, and potatoes. Foh, Mr. Speaker! what a nauseous banquet have the Treasury invited their friends from their pleasant gardens and villas in the country to partake of, in the month of May.

An honourable member, on the other side of the House [Anthony Bacon Esq;] one of the most ancient contractors within these walls, and, as I am told, a considerable merchant

merchant in the city, has mentioned that contracting in this House was the very spirit of trade. So I believe it is; and the noble Lord in the blue ribbon may possibly find, when the day of trouble and adversity shall arrive, that that very spirit of profit, which induced Ince to sell Yarico, may tempt some few steady friends of his prosperity to contract for, and furnish out the black cloth and scaffolding at their unhappy patron's execution.

Mr. *Sergeant Adair* said, He was certain, that among the Mr. Ser-
merchants of the city of London, many might be found as geant *Adair*.
adequate to the execution of a contract as any member of that House; yet he was sensible, that in case of a competition he who had a feat would be preferred; and this created a fair conclusion, that contracts were beneficial to the minister. He would wish that clause, however, were inserted into the bill, preserving the present contractors from its tendency; they had made their treaties before its existence, and it ought not to be of an *ex post facto* nature. He recurred to what a noble Lord [Lord Nugent] said in the outset of the debate, that pensioners and placemen ought to be excluded, as well as contractors. He from his heart thought so, and was sincerely of opinion, that there never would be an independent House of Commons until such an event should take place.

Governor *Pownal* concluded the debate. He did not ob- Governor
ject to the motion, but believed it was not adequate to the *Pownal*.
purpose; it could not provide against secret jobbing; and he would rather wish to see members rise, like the honourable gentleman [Mr. Wombwell] and defend their contracts in the face of the House, than have them made by the intervention of nominal agents. A motion was then made, "That the Speaker do leave the chair," passed in the negative, the numbers being, against the motion 115, for it, 113.

A motion was then made for adjourning the commitment of the bill for two months, when the numbers were, Ayes, 113, Noes, 109.

May 5.

Lord *North* delivered the following message from his Lord *North*.
Majesty:

GEORGE R.

"His Majesty relying on the repeated zeal and affection of his faithful commons, and considering that in this critical juncture, emergencies may arise that may be of the utmost importance, and attended with the most dangerous consequences,

quences, if proper means should not be immediately applied to defeat and prevent them; is desirous, that this House will enable him to defray any extraordinary expences incurred, or to be incurred, by the military services, for the service of the year 1778, and to take such further measures as the exigency of affairs may require."

And his Lordship moved, that the consideration of the message should be referred to the committee of supply.

Sir George
Yonge.

Sir George Yonge objected to the motion, and considered it as very improper, in the present crisis of affairs, to vote indefinite sums of money to an administration so incapable of expending the public revenue with œconomy and effect. He thought the emergencies ought to be ascertained to the House, the sums specified, and authentic documents and vouchers of the expenditure laid upon the table.

Mr. Turner.

Mr. Turner was of the same opinion: the House ought to sit and vote the money gradually, as the wants and occasions arose.

Mr. Town-
send.

Mr. Townshend said, it was no secret, that the Toulon squadron, consisting of twelve ships of the line, and several others of inferior force, had sailed from that port on the 13th of April, in order, as it was supposed, to strike some decisive blow in the western world. Yet what has been the conduct of administration? To keep our fleet idle at home, or for no other purpose but to be exhibited as public spectacle, to gratify the curiosity of those who were inclined to waste their time and money. He then pointed out the very defenceless state of our several dependencies in North America, and the West-Indies: and said, he trembled for their fate. As soon as ministers had notice of the forwardness of this armament, they ought to have dispatched a sufficient force to watch their motions, and have taken such a certain station as would have put it out of power of D'Estaing to elude us. What was the case now? The fleet was sailed; but whither, no man could tell; whether to Halifax, the Delaware, Quebec, to attack our West-India Islands, or to make a conquest of the East Indies. He asked, whither is the spirit of England fled? Where is the wisdom that used to pervade her councils? Where are the terrors gone, with which she was wont to fill the bosoms of those who dared to insult her? Britain, he feared, was betrayed; treachery and corruption vied with each other to see which should first effect her downfall and disgrace. He was remarkably severe upon those who, he said, affected to fill the rank of ministers, and directly charged them with ignorance,

norance, laziness, incapacity, and treachery; and lamented, that while our pageant shews and streamers were wantoning in the wind at Spithead, our glory was tarnishing; our coasts were insulted; and the British flag for ever disgraced!

Lord *North* hoped, that when the honourable gentleman Lord *North*, knew the preparations that had been made, and the care taken to protect this country from invasion, he would not so hastily condemn the ministry as treacherous and incapable. The utmost exertions had been made; and though no fleet had yet failed to oppose the Toulon squadron, that could not be properly laid to the charge of ministerial incapacity, since the French had it at all times in their power, by their mode of supply from their register, to man out a fleet sooner than we had.

Mr. *Adam* congratulated the nation on the recovery, in Mr. *Adam*, some degree, of that worthy spirit which had on so many occasions signalized the nation. The example in the honourable gentleman (Mr. *Townshend*) shone so bright, that he hoped it would be followed.

Mr. *Pulteney* begged the House to remember that the advice of the sailing of the Toulon fleet, came to the administration on Monday the 27th ult. and no privy council was summoned until the Wednesday following. The wind was fair for sailing even till Saturday last, and the opportunity was neglected.

The motion was agreed to.

May 6.

The House in committee on supply of the King's message.

The order of day being read, for a vote of credit to his Majesty of 1,000,000l.

Mr. *T. Townshend* drew a picture of our national defence, Mr. *T. Townshend*, having, as he said, a militia without arms, who were gone to be encamped without tent equipage; and a navy, either not manned, or not victualled, but lying embayed at Spithead for the mere parade of a naval review, while the Toulon fleet had failed on its expedition, which might prove fatal to the distant settlements of the British empire. He enquired whether we were actually at war or at peace with Spain, that she dared to insult our flag in her ports, and our commanders were so degradingly treated by her, whilst every attention was paid to the ships of our revolted provinces, and their captains saluted with naval honours by

the admiral at Cadiz? Was it the mere incapacity of administration which tempted Spain to treat us with such reproach? If it was; that incapacity was as injurious to the nation as the blackest treachery. He asked if it was possible for ministers to be awake, and yet suffer the Toulon fleet to fail, without taking a single step to oppose them? Could they call themselves ministers and guardians of the nation's weal, and yet confess that they had procured no intelligence till Monday sen'night, of the departure of that fleet on the 13th of April? Was it from want of power to oppose them, or from the same inauspicious fatality which had banished every honest man from the councils of his Majesty? Was our navy a mere pageant fleet, or was it equal to actual service? Was it victualled and manned, or was it yet to be equipped? Did the registry of seamen in France give her an advantage over us in the speedy equipment of her navy? Was this never known till that day? Were we so ignorant of this advantage, that no exertions should be made to guard against it? Where was now the boasted respectability of our navy? Were we to trace it in the pillages suffered on our coasts, or the alarms and terror into which so many parts of the kingdom have been lately thrown, by invading insolence? But the plundering a nobleman's house, the ravaging a few estates, or burning an odd town, were not perhaps objects to challenge the vigour of our fleets! The spirit of the militia was certainly very great. The ardour of the first men in the kingdom, and the generous alacrity of persons of every condition to enter into that constitutional body, left us little apprehension for our internal defence; but in this, as in every other instance of the conduct of government, there were many evident neglects. The delay in calling them out, and the want of tents and arms, left them even yet unequal to the duties of essential service. He appealed to the House on the validity of the charge of government against gentlemen on his side of the House—"that they had suddenly rushed from backwardness to precipitation, from despondency to confidence, from checking the ardour of administration to a crimination of their inactivity." But had not the change of public affairs reconciled the consistency of these two lines of conduct? The first was between us and America, the latter between us and France. That related to an offensive war against our brethren; this to a defensive one against our natural enemy. Upon the whole

whole, he would not oppose a grant which was for such necessary purposes, but he apprehended it would be of little use, if the administration of affairs remained in the hands of men so flagrantly ignorant, and so scandalously negligent as the present servants of the crown.

Mr. *Penton*, assured the House, that we had a fleet ably *Mr. Penton* equipped, and ready to sail when commanded. He denied that the Spanish admiral had returned the salute of the rebel privateer, and said he had his information of the affair from no less an authority than Captain Rowley himself, whose letter on the subject he was then in possession of. He vindicated the ministry respecting the Whitehaven affair. Such attacks had been made in the most active administrations, of which the descent of Mons. Thurot upon Carrickfergus in the north of Ireland, during the last war, was a recent instance. Every thing that could be done on that occasion, had been instantly put in execution. Four ships of force were dispatched in different courses, in search of the privateer, and would, he hoped, be soon able to give some account of her.

On being asked by Sir George Yonge, if the fleet at Spithead had received any orders for sailing, he declined giving an answer to that question, unless called upon by the House.

Mr. *Fox* asked the House, if any man in his senses would *Mr. Fox* give a vote of credit to an administration, who were always the last who learned what they should have been the first to know? An administration who could be so insensible of the sudden emergencies of such times as these, that, when official advice came of an event almost universally understood for several days before, not more than one of them could be found in town; their amusements had engrossed their attention; nor could a sufficient number be procured for holding a council till the hour of debate was lost? Who then could support such ministers? Who could be extravagant enough to trust them with expenditure of a single shilling?

Lord *George Germain* acknowledged that appearances were *Lord G. Germain* against the ministry; but appearances were not to justify a condemnation; a full enquiry into the circumstances might place their case in a different light. For his part, he was ready to meet every scrutiny, and wished punishment to fall where it was deserved. When the dispatches arrived he took the speediest means to convene the ministers from the country,

country, where some of them were. From the time of their arrival the greatest expedition had been used by him, in sending the orders of council to the proper officers at Spithead; but misfortunes were not always to be avoided. He hoped, he heartily wished, our affairs might take a happier turn; and concluded by urging, that it would have been imprudent to have dispatched after Count D'Estaing a fleet destined for our home defence before we knew the destination of his fleet.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. Fox then begged the attention of the House to a resolution which he had lately moved in the committee on the state of the nation, "That the navy in its present state is inadequate to the defence of the empire." Ministers then opposed it by assertions and votes, but they now confirmed it in argument and action; for the noble Lord admitted that a fleet should have been ordered out for our external protection if our internal defence could have permitted it. Mr. Fox went further in asserting, that a fleet might have been spared from the immediate protection of our coasts, as he was confident our militia and army would be fully sufficient to repel any foreign invader: there were ample resources in the present spirit of the nation to mock every menace of invasion. With such a dependence, how was it possible to estimate the guilt of ministers who could tamely suffer an hostile squadron to carry unmolested destruction to the British army in America? The disgrace of a Burgoyne was, it seems, to be atoned by the defeat of a Howe, and the want of information, respecting the Franco-American treaty, is compensated in the ignorance of D'Estaing's sailing and destination. Was there any thing more wanted to seal the fatal character of the present inauspicious ministry? Or could they any longer hope to be trusted with the treasures of a nation they have so shamefully betrayed, and of whose situation the noble Lord himself seemed to entertain such little confidence? At his conclusion he expressed a wish to know whether a fleet had even yet been ordered to sail after the French squadron, and, if not too late, to prevent the destruction of our navy and army in America.

Lord G.
Germain.

Lord George Germain complained that his words were not fairly interpreted: he wished indeed that the orders of council could have been sooner dispatched to Spithead, but he had not expressed a single idea of despondency. The navy was now in a formidable state, and was every day encreasing in strength and numbers, sufficient to warrant the fairest hopes. If ministers had been disposed to trust the defence

of this kingdom to the militia, much as the fleet might be wanted at home, a number of ships might have been sent abroad. The painful pre-eminence of office at such a time was, he said, little to be envied; for his part, if any gentleman of talents and inclination to serve his country wished to come into his place, he was ready to resign it. He added, that there was little necessity for asking if General Howe was in danger; whether a fleet had been ordered out to protect him; and he flattered himself that D'Estaing should not attack us in any part of our empire with impunity.

Mr. *Burke* said, it was idle to pretend that the destination *Mr. Burke* of the Toulon fleet had been so long a secret, or that it was criminal if true. American pilots had been long engaged to conduct it. We had lost the advantage of the wind, which blows to the west during the month of April, and that by the crime of ministers; were we therefore to give our purse strings to their will, and retire in confidence to cultivate our gardens, smooth our lawns, and assume the little offices of rustic magistracy? Could we trust the sole guidance of the ship of state to pilots, whom we have so lately detected in the basest torpor, whilst the danger threatened—who left her to the mercy of the waves, quitting the decks in the moment that called for all their skill and activity—who were not to be found when the squall came on. Alas! the rudder was lashed, and Palinurus gone to sleep! He ended his speech by lamenting that his country should be reduced to the poor dependence of hopes and prayers, the arms of old women; and that a British minister, instead of acting the statesman, and timely exerting the strength of the nation, should dwindle into a priest, and piously offer up his prayers for the salvation of his country!

The question was called for, and carried without a division.

The order of the day for the second reading of the Irish bills; the first of which, to take off the duty laid on the exportation of Irish sail cloth, linens, &c. Sir Cecil Wray proposed an amendment by adding the words “this day two months,” instead of “now,” which occasioned a slight alteration; but was agreed to.

Next came on the second reading of the second bill “for the free importation to Ireland of all merchandize from America, Africa, and the West Indies, &c.” which was likewise

likewise opposed by a similar motion of Sir Cecil Wray, to introduce the words, "this day three months," instead of *now*; and which brought on a debate.

Sir Cecil
Wray.

Sir *Cecil Wray* took a general review of the commercial state of Ireland, and expressed his hearty wishes, that the British Parliament might render her every assistance in its power, without infringing on the trade of Great Britain; said he had no objection to admit of Ireland's participating equally with us of the benefits of a free trade, provided she bore an equal share of our national burthens;---but that was not the case; Ireland was computed to contain 2,000,000 of souls, and they were taxed at 1,000,000; 10s. each upon an average; that Great Britain having 6,000,000 of souls, and her taxes being 12,000,000, each inhabitant was taxed 40s. an astonishing difference, and such as could not justify the introduction of the bills now depending. He well knew the grievances of the former country, and lamented them; among which were the Irish pension list—the sinecure offices—the Roman Catholic bills—the absentees—and various others;---and assured the House he would gladly join in redressing them; but the present business was of too serious and complicated a nature to be hurried through at the latter end of a session; that, in his opinion, the trade of Ireland should be referred to a committee, who should minutely investigate it, and report it to the House, who might then take the whole into consideration, and endeavour to relieve them. As to a rebellion in Ireland, in consequence of a non-compliance with the present request, he had no idea of it; the people at large were not interested in the event; a few merchants of Corke, Dublin, &c. might; but the wealthy and opulent were not the men for rebellion; they were the poor and indigent; if America had been rich, she would never have been in rebellion; the rich only are calculated for slaves. If these bills passed, he would not answer but a rebellion might happen in England, because our manufacturers would be out of employ; and as a further consideration, a part of our sea nursery would be destroyed by the passing of these bills.

On the whole, Sir Cecil was of opinion, that the present measure was brought into the House at a very improper time, when the minds of men were taken up with matters of the most singular importance; and, besides, at the conclusion of the session. A matter of such magnitude, as overthrowing the whole system of our trade laws, was not of light consideration;

deration ; and ought not to be hurried on in a sudden and indecent manner. Besides, the petitions on the table deserved particular attention ; the petitioners were men of a description entitled to respect, and a patient hearing ; and he would appeal to the candour of gentlemen on every side of the House, whether now, on the 6th of May, was a proper time to enter into so laborious and important an investigation ? He professed the best disposition towards the whole Irish nation ; said, he was ready to concur, at any time, in whatever might promote the true interest of that country ; and if the amendment which he meant to propose should meet the sentiments of the House, he would move for a committee, before the House rose, to take into consideration, early in the next sessions, the restrictive laws on the trade of Ireland ; and do all in his power to forward the interests of that country, where they did not immediately interfere with those of England.

Sir *Thomas Egerton* seconded the motion in behalf of his Manchester friends ; said the loss to Manchester, in checks only, if these bills passed, would be 100,000l. annually ; begged the House would at least hear counsel for the different petitioning towns, before they passed them ; and agreed in recommending the Irish trade to be referred to a committee, of which he would readily make one, and give it all the attention and assistance in his power. Sir Thomas Egerton.

Mr. *T. Townshend* said, the proposition of going into a committee, was little better than a direct negative. It held out no security, but a vague promise to move a committee, which committee should appoint another committee. On these grounds, he entirely disapproved of the amendment, and would therefore give his vote, that the bill be read a second time. Mr. T. Townshend.

Earl *Nugent* particularly adverted to the motives which had actuated the petitioners against the bills, and in a peculiar manner he spoke to the conduct of the city of Glasgow, who had, he said, with the most illiberal sentiments, prayed that neither the present, nor any future advantage should be granted to Ireland, that might, in the least degree, operate to the disadvantage of Britain. He could not, he said, bestow upon this conduct a term vile enough ; it was mean, unmanly, ungenerous, despicable, and even diabolical. Earl Nugent.

Sir *Adam Ferguson* defended the city of Glasgow, against the charge of having entertained diabolical motives for their petition to the House. He read the petition, and spoke highly Sir Adam Ferguson.

highly in favour of the liberality and philanthropy of the Glasgow merchants, at the same time saying, they so far gave preference to their own, before any foreign country, that they could not see its interests violated, as they imagined, without exerting their endeavours to prevent it. If the bills before the House passed into a law, the city of Glasgow would in a very particular manner, be affected by their tendency. They had, in common with the rest of Scotland, embarked in the same bottom with England, and become liable to a proportion of the national debt, for the sake of enjoying an equality of commerce. On that foundation they had laid out immense sums of money in the cultivation of the sugar-trade; they had considered it as an hereditary right, depending on the security of the acts in their favour; and it was, in a great degree, their only property and wealth. A great part of their annual returns flowed from Ireland, and they would be most materially injured if that kingdom should participate the trade with them. He considered the present bills as improper on another account. By their passing, they would stand in the way of an union, which he considered as the only solid basis of equality that could be built upon. He therefore hoped the House would agree to the amendment.

Lord Vis.
Middleton.

Lord Viscount *Middleton* said, he had heard that the people of Manchester and Liverpool had determined, notwithstanding their late exertions, to be no longer loyal if these bills should pass. He was sensible that these towns, as well as Glasgow, were experienced in rebellion so abundantly, that the transition would be an object of easy accomplishment, and the world would entertain little surprize if they threw aside their new-fangled opinion. He could not enough wonder, that the honourable gentleman before him should, of all men, plead the hereditary right of the city of Glasgow to the commerce of the English, on the principle of having taken upon themselves a proportion of the national debt. He thought a gentleman of that country ought to have been silent upon that head.

Ld. *North.*

Lord *North* was of opinion, that as the expectations of the Irish were raised from what the House had already done, it it would be unwise to protract the business to another session. The gentlemen who opposed the bill seemed all to agree in one point, that somewhat ought to be done for their relief, though they differed about the nature and extent of what ought to be done. He saw no reason, however, why the present bill should not pass, since the House might, notwithstanding,

standing, appoint a committee to enquire into the state of the trade, that from their report a plan might be formed and adopted. He did not see the mighty difficulty that was said to exist, in calculating the difference necessarily to arise in the annual imports, by the effect of the bill before the House. It would create small difference, comparatively speaking, in the revenue, since the diminution in the imports of one place would give an addition to those of another, as the difference of duty on the enumerated articles was very trifling. He held it as the duty of Britain to give Ireland a degree, at least, of recompence for the exertions she had made, were we not inclined, by policy, to give her relief from the restrictions she laboured under, and he hoped the House would agree on the present bill, as a test of their intention and inclination to befriend her in future more substantially.

Mr. *Burke* answered the arguments of the honourable Mr. *Burke* gentlemen who opposed the bill. The bills before the House, he said, were no more than restorations of what the wisdom of a British Parliament had, on a former occasion, thought proper to invest Ireland with. In the 12th of Charles II. the navigation bills passed, extending to Ireland as well as England. A kind of left-handed policy had, however, deprived her of the freedom she enjoyed under that act, and she had ever since remained under the most cruel, oppressive, and unnatural restriction. Deprived of every incentive to industry, and shut out from every passage to wealth, she had inwardly lamented, but she had never complained of her condition. She had gone the most forward lengths in serving the interest, and defending the rights of Great Britain. She had assisted in conquests from which she was to gain no advantage, and emptied her treasury, and desolated her land to prove her attachment and loyalty to the government of this country. Such had been her conduct, and her reward had been restriction and bondage of the most cruel nature. He did not mean, by describing her situation, to engage the humanity of the House in her favour. The people of Ireland would not accept of favours flowing from the humanity of the House. They called for justice, not for pity. They requested Britain to be wise, not to be generous; to provide for her own good, and secure her own interest, sensible that wisdom and prudence would dictate, that to accomplish these, a contrary conduct towards them was necessary.

The honourable gentleman who opposed the bill, had drawn into collection the arguments and reasons they maintained to exist against all the bills, meaning, no doubt, thereby to prejudice the House the more by their aggregate effect. Though he detested this inequitable mode of proceeding, he would not evade the combat even on that ground, nor wish to engage the House in favour of the bills, if he could not, in the fullest manner, answer every objection they had brought to every part. The honourable gentleman who had moved the amendment, wished to reconcile the people of Ireland to delay, by pledging the honour of Parliament, that something effectual should be done in their favour next session. He knew the temper of the Irish too well, to believe that they would sit down satisfied with such an assertion. They would conclude within themselves, depending on experience for their guide, that the promise of something to be done next sessions, would alone produce the repetition of a promise for the session following; and promise, repetition, and promise, from session to session, would be the only benefit they would receive. He did not conclude, that the denial of what even justice demanded of us in their favour, would produce rebellion and disturbance in that country; their loyalty and zeal was superior to complaint; they might despair, but they would not resist. Other places, experienced in rebellion, had determined, it seems, to enter or not to enter into it, according as these bills were determined; but Ireland regarded more the welfare of the empire at large than the interest of itself in particular. They were patient and loyal, and therefore, he supposed, they were crushed, for it was the policy of the present day to forego the excellent and noble maxim of the Romans, "*parcere subjectis et debellare superbos*," for the infamous proverb of British growth, "Proud to be humble, and humble to be proud." He then went into a particular detail of the arguments of the honourable gentlemen relating to commercial advantage. The annual revenue of the two kingdoms had been exultingly, but most inequitably, drawn into comparison, to prove that Ireland paid no proportion of tax. It was not the number of inhabitants that constituted the different specific in the article of taxation between two countries; but the distinction of internal opulence and external advantage. Compare the two countries by that line, and it will be found that Ireland is taxed in a quadruple proportion more than England. The internal wealth, and the external advantage of trade and commerce

commerce is forty times greater in England than in Ireland. There is therefore, no ratio of proportion preserved in the mode of taxing the latter. She is taxed, without enjoying the means of payment. She is debarred the use of shoes and stockings, and yet she is made to pay for them. Restricted from trading, she enjoys no opportunity of acquiring wealth to defray and discharge the taxes imposed upon her. Enlarge her means of payment, and in proportion to her ability, enlarge her taxes. An equality of commercial advantage could not be established between the two countries. The opulence of the one is a barrier insuperable by the other. The great disproportion of capital effectually destroys the possibility of an equality. The one can extend her mart of trade through every different channel of the universe; the other, restrained in her ability, cannot prosecute the same tract; and as the ability of the proceeding increases in the same proportion, in the progress of one as well as the other, the same proportion of advantage will still remain. The Irish will be able to follow the English at equal distance, in every stage, both in the outset and in the continuance, but they will never be able to accelerate their motion in order to overtake them. The lowness of labour is a nugatory argument, for until the instant that the price of labour is equal, the superiority of manufacture will remain with the English. The price of labour rises with the growth of manufacture, and is highest when the manufacture is best. The experience of every day tells us, that where the price of labour is highest, the manufacturer is able to sell his commodity at the lowest price. The difference of duty of the imported enumerated articles, is so abundantly over-balanced by the other advantages enjoyed by this country, that without it there could not be the smallest degree of competition in manufacture. Not one, however of the innumerable articles, is less taxed in Ireland than in England, except those already permitted to her. For tho' the petitions on the table are most, if not all tending to express their fears of the consequences of granting a free exportation of sail-cloth and iron to the Irish; it is a fact that they already enjoy a free exportation of these articles; and particularly he would remark of manufactured iron and steel, as he did, on a similar occasion, of sail-cloth, that the petition served to shew the foundation on which they all were laid, namely, mere conjecture. They had not felt from the reality, what they dreaded from the idea, for an act existed at this time,

permitting the free exportation of manufactured iron; which, however, had not been prosecuted, because of the advantages enjoyed by the English. The only article imported under that act into England, was a quantity of cork-screws, which, though it might be an evidence of their luxury in living, was but a feeble proof of their excellence of manufacture. But, indeed, every other instance, as well as this, served to prove how erroneously they had formed their opinions upon this subject. Some years ago, when a bill was brought in for the free importation of woollen yarn into England, petitions were received from every different part of the country, complaining of the injury it would create; but now that they had experienced its effects, they felt and acknowledged its beneficial tendency. It was absurd to think, that a participation of manufacture would be detrimental to this country. Had we not seen the woollen manufacture planted in different parts of this country; and had we not also seen that the competitions had served to advance both.

He concluded with lamenting, that in one instance, he should be directed by his conscience to take a part against his constituents. It had been his invariable aim to protect their rights and interests, and to act at all times as became the senator and representative of the people. In this instance he had dared to act contrary to the wishes, but not, he was sensible, to the interests of his constituents. He differed in opinion from them on the noblest principle, namely, from the conviction of his being in the right; and if, from his conduct in this business, he should be deprived of his seat in that honourable House, it would stand on record, an example to future representatives of the Commons of England, that one man, at least, had dared to oppose his constituents, when his judgment assured him they were in the wrong.

The House divided; for the bill 126, against it 77.

A great number of petitions were presented against the measures intended for the benefit of Ireland. Some of these petitions are doubtless of importance; but a selection is sometimes liable to censure; therefore it has been judged most proper to insert them all together, and to print them in a smaller type, in order to take as little room as possible.

A petition of the mayor, bailiffs and burgeses of the borough of Wigan, in the county Palatine of Lancaster, was presented to the House, and read; setting forth, that the trade of the said borough, as well as of many adjacent parishes and townships,

townships, hath for several years chiefly consisted, and now consists, in the weaving and manufacturing of white cloths, canvasses, or sail cloth, checks, and other lincn cloths, or cotton and linen mixed, for the consumption of this country, as well as for exportation ; and that the greatest number of the inhabitants of those places having been brought up in the said manufactures, and having served apprenticeships to the same, are thereby rendered unable to pursue any other business, so as to support themselves and families ; and that the said manufactures being chiefly made of yarn imported from Ireland, subject to a duty there, and to a considerable charge for commission for buying, and for freight and insurance upon the same to England, the petitioners have, with the deepest concern, observed the resolutions of the House of the eighth and ninth days of this instant April (amongst others) “ That all goods, wares, and merchandizes, being the produce or manufacture of the kingdom of Ireland (wool and woollen manufactures only excepted) or commodities of the growth, produce, or manufacture, of Great Britain, legally imported into Ireland, or foreign certificate goods legally imported from Great Britain into Ireland, be permitted to be exported directly from the said kingdom in British ships navigated according to law, to be imported into any of the British plantations, or to any of the settlements belonging to Great Britain on the coast of Africa ;” “ That the duties now payable on the importation of cotton yarn, being the manufacture of Ireland, into Great Britain, do cease, and be no longer paid ;” “ And that all sail cloth and cordage of the manufacture of Ireland, be permitted to be imported into Great Britain free of duty ;” which, if passed into a law, will, as they apprehend, and are advised, enable the people of Ireland to manufacture and send goods to foreign markets cheaper than can be done in this country, by reason of the disadvantages abovementioned, and the high price of provisions, and other taxes and duties, to which the petitioners apprehend the people of Ireland are not subject ; and as the abovementioned manufactures have been carried on in this country for a long series of years, by which means many families have been drawn from other countries to follow the same employ, who have acquired settlements here, and depend wholly on the said manufactures for support, should their wages be reduced lower than they now are, must necessarily become chargeable to the respective places to which they belong, which are already burthened with a very numerous poor, and other taxes, as much as the estates or inhabitants can bear ; and that, although the petitioners may wish every encouragement to be given as well to the inhabitants of Ireland as of every part of his Majesty’s dominions, yet they hope and trust the House will, at the same time, protect the manufactures of this country, so essential to the same, and by which so many thousands of its inhabitants have depended, and now do depend, altogether for their support : and therefore praying, that the said resolutions may not pass into a law, or that the petitioners may have such other relief in the premises as to the House shall seem meet.

A petition of land owners, manufacturers, &c. of Wigan, was also presented ; containing the same allegations and prayer as in the preceding petition.

A petition of gentlemen, clergy, land owners, merchants, and manufacturers, of Preston ; setting forth, that the petitioners observe, by the votes, that a bill is ordered to be brought in, for the exportation of all goods, wares, and merchandizes, the produce or manufacture of the kingdom of Ireland, directly from the said kingdom, in British ships, into any of the British plantations, or any of the settlements belonging to Great Britain on the coast of Africa (wool and woollen manufactures only excepted) for the importation of all goods, wares, and merchandizes, the produce of the British plantations, or of any of the settlements belonging to Great Britain on the coast of Africa, into the said kingdom of Ireland (indico and tobacco only excepted) for the importation of cotton yarn, manufactured in Ireland, into Great Britain ; and for the importation of sail cloth and cordage, manufactured in Ireland, into Great Britain, duty free ; and alledging, that the linen manufactures, which have been at great expence established, and are now carried on in the town and neighbourhood of Preston, will be very greatly injured, if not altogether ruined, should the said bill pass into a law ; the advantages to which the manufacturers have, by their labour and industry, intitled themselves, will be thereby taken from them, the poor will be deprived of the means of supporting themselves and their families, and the value of land in this part of the kingdom, which depends on the prosperity of trade, will not only be extremely reduced, but the inhabitants will be rendered unable to support the great weight of public burthens, to which they at present so amply and chearfully contribute ; and therefore praying, that they may be heard by their counsel against the said bill, and that the same may not pass into a law, or that the petitioners may have such other relief as to the House shall seem most expedient.

A petition

A petition of several persons, inhabitants of Bridport, Beamister, and Broadwinfor, manufacturers of sail cloth and cordage; setting forth, that the petitioners observe, by the votes, that a bill is depending, for permitting all sail cloth and cordage, of the manufacture of Ireland, to be imported from Ireland into Great Britain free of duty; and that, should such a law take place, the petitioners apprehend, from the great cheapness of provisions and labour in that kingdom, and other local advantages, the Irish will soon be enabled to rival the manufactories of those articles in Great Britain, in which case the petitioners will be deprived of their only remaining branches of trade, and their labourers and dependants must inevitably be reduced to the lowest distress, no other manufactories to any considerable extent being carried on in either of these towns and parishes; and therefore praying, that the same may not pass into a law.

A petition of manufacturers of glass, of Stourbridge and Dudley; setting forth, that the petitioners observe, there is a bill now depending before the House, whereby glass, manufactured in Ireland, may be exported by the Irish, except into Great Britain; and that the petitioners do now, and for many years past have carried on the making of glass in the neighbourhood aforesaid; and that the said trade is charged with heavy duties laid on the materials used in carrying on the same, which duties leave a very considerable charge on all manufactured goods exported from this kingdom, although the petitioners are allowed a certain draw-back on all goods so exported, such draw-back being materially less than the duties with which the petitioners are charged upon such goods; and that the petitioners are apprehensive, should the said bill be carried into a law, their trade will be materially injured, by the very considerable charge which, after deducting the allowed draw-back, will remain upon their goods exported, should the makers and manufacturers of glass in Ireland be allowed, by the said bill, to export glass free from all duties, which, by enabling them so greatly to undersell the petitioners at foreign markets, would, in the apprehension of the petitioners, operate as a prohibition to the exporting the glass manufactures of this kingdom; and therefore praying, that they may be heard, by themselves and counsel, against the said bill passing into a law, or that they may have such relief in the premises as to the House shall seem meet.

A petition of merchants, and manufacturers of nails at Dudley; setting forth, that the petitioners observe, that leave is given to bring in a bill, for opening a free trade between Ireland and the British settlements in America and the West Indies; and alledging, that there is a very large quantity of Russia iron imported into this kingdom, a considerable proportion of which is manufactured into nails and many other articles in the said town and neighbourhood; and that there is a duty of 2l. 8s. 6d. *per* ton paid on all Russia iron imported here, and a draw-back of the said duty of about 1l. 18s. 6d. *per* ton on its exportation to Ireland, which gives them an advantage of nearly $17\frac{1}{2}$ *per cent.* upon the raw materials; and that, if the said bill should pass into a law, and the said draw-back on the exportation of Russia iron into Ireland be still continued, the petitioners have just reason to fear, that the great advantage they will have in this particular, together with the lowness of their rents, provision, labour, and taxes, will deprive many thousand industrious manufacturers in the neighbourhood of Dudley of the means of maintaining themselves and families, and thereby necessitate them to emigrate, or starve at home; and that, taking it in a more extensive view, the petitioners conceive, should such a bill pass into a law, it will produce the most serious consequences to this kingdom, by lessening the strength and revenue thereof, the former by great emigrations of various artificers from which the army is greatly recruited, the latter by impoverishing great numbers of industrious tradesmen, and thereby rendering them unable to bear the present heavy taxes; and therefore praying, that the House will take the premises into their consideration, so that the petitioners may be placed at least upon an equal footing with the manufacturers of Ireland.

A petition of merchants, traders, and manufacturers of Glasgow; setting forth, that the petitioners have seen printed copies of five different bills now depending, respecting the trade and manufactures of Ireland, all of which, if passed into laws, they are of opinion, will tend greatly to the prejudice of the commerce and manufactures of Great Britain; and that the petitioners are well-wishers to the happiness and prosperity of their fellow subjects in Ireland; but when they reflect that, upon the faith of the continuation of those laws by which the commerce and manufactures of Britain have for so long a time been regulated, they have made all those expensive establishments so necessary for their business both in the commercial and in the manufacturing line, they cannot be silent under the view of being de-

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prived of their wonted privileges, and thereby reduced from an affluent to an indigent state ; for the petitioners cannot entertain a doubt, that the passing into laws the bills now depending will very much diminish the commerce and manufactures of Great Britain ; the natural advantages of Ireland are such, as, in that event, to establish in the said kingdom many of those manufactures by which Great Britain has been enriched ; by the loss of those manufactures, and the consequent decrease of our population, not only will the landed interest suffer exceedingly, but the national reputation must also sink, from the inability of the remaining people to pay those taxes, which are so essentially necessary for the support of government ; and although it is very natural that the petitioners, from motives of private interest, should oppose the bills now depending, yet do they, (although in the most dutiful and respectful manner) beg leave to represent that, even upon the most liberal principles, the commercial privileges of Great Britain ought only to be extended to those parts of the empire where the people pay taxes in proportion to those levied upon the inhabitants of Britain ; and, if the petitioners are not very much mistaken, the taxes paid by the people of Ireland bear but a small proportion to those established in Britain ; and therefore, by passing into laws the bills now depending, an encouragement will be given to the trade and manufactures of Ireland, not only ruinous to those of Britain, but which the people of Ireland have no title, either in justice or in policy, to receive ; and therefore praying, not only that the bills now depending may not be passed, but that no indulgencies, which may be detrimental to the commerce and manufactures of Britain, may be allowed, until, by bearing their proportional share of the national expence, the people of Ireland shall become, in justice and in sound policy, entitled to an unlimited freedom in commerce and manufactures ; and that the petitioners may be heard, by counsel, against the bills abovementioned.

A petition of the mayor and capital burgesses of Walsall, manufacturers of brass and iron ; setting forth, that the petitioners observe, by the votes, that a bill is depending, for opening a free trade between Ireland and all the British settlements ; and that, should such a law take place, it will deprive great numbers of manufacturers in this kingdom of the means of maintaining themselves and numerous families, or otherwise cause such emigrations of manufacturers from this country to Ireland (where labour and provisions of all sorts are cheaper) as will enable that kingdom, in a few years, to rival the manufacturers of England ; and therefore praying, that such bill may not pass into a law.

A petition of the mayor, aldermen, citizens, and manufacturers of gloves, of Worcester ; setting forth, that the petitioners observe, by the votes, that bills have been read, for opening a free trade between Ireland and the British plantations and settlements ; and that, should such laws take place, the same will deprive great numbers of manufacturers in this kingdom of the means of subsisting themselves and families, particularly in the gloving branch, or otherwise cause such emigration of manufacturers from this country to Ireland (where provisions of all kinds are cheaper, and from whence skins are exported for this market, which pay a heavy duty) as will enable that kingdom, in a few years, to rival the manufactures of England ; and therefore praying, that such bills may not pass into laws.

A petition of the mayor, burgesses, and commonalty, of Bristol, under their common seal ; setting forth, that the petitioners observe, by the votes, that five bills are brought in, for opening a free and direct trade between the kingdom of Ireland and the British plantations in America, and the settlements belonging to Great Britain on the coast of Africa, and to permit the importation of certain goods of the manufacture of Ireland into this kingdom duty-free ; and that the petitioners apprehend, if such bills were to pass into a law, they would prove destructive to that great system of commerce, manufacture, and revenue, happily adopted at the establishment of those plantations and settlements, and which has ever since been pursued with success, and would be highly injurious to thousands of manufacturers, who now maintain themselves by honest industry ; and the petitioners conceive, that it would be most unequal to grant a free importation into Ireland from the said plantations and settlements, or to allow the manufactures of Ireland to be imported into this kingdom, except under the like regulations, and the same duties, as the people of this country are subject to ; and therefore praying, that the said bills may not pass into a law.

A petition of the master, wardens, and commonalty, of the society of merchant venturers of Bristol, under their common seal ; setting forth, that the petitioners have seen five several bills brought into the House ; one to permit the importation of certain goods from the British plantations in America, or the British Settlements on the coast of Africa, into the kingdom of Ireland ; another, to permit the exportation of certain goods therein mentioned

tioned directly from Ireland into any British plantation in America, or any British settlement on the coast of Africa ; another, to permit the exportation of glass, manufactured in Ireland, from thence to any place whatsoever except Great Britain ; another, to permit the importation of cotton yarn, the manufacture of Ireland, into this kingdom, duty-free ; and the other, to permit the importation of sail cloth and cordage, of the manufacture of Ireland, into this kingdom, duty-free ; and that the petitioners apprehend, if such bills were to pass into a law, that great system of commerce and revenue, which has been established with so much consideration, and at so much expence, would be at once overset, and a torrent of mischiefs unthought of and unforeseen would be poured in upon this kingdom ; and that the duties payable in Ireland, on almost every article of trade which concern the bills in question, are vastly below the duties paid on those articles in Great Britain ; that provisions are cheaper in Ireland than in England, and the labourers and manufacturers of Ireland are not subject to the same taxes as those of Great Britain, all which circumstances will furnish Ireland with such advantages over Great Britain as cannot be withstood ; and that the landed interest of this kingdom, ever benefited by the flourishing state of trade and manufactures, will also be greatly injured by the means aforesaid ; for, besides other circumstances, thousands of artisans, who now maintain themselves by honest industry, would be deprived of the means of their subsistence, and must become burthensome to their parishes ; and the petitioners apprehend, it would be most unequal to grant such advantages to Ireland, not paying the same taxes, or being subject to the same duties, as the people of this country ; and that great numbers of ships and men are now employed to carry from this kingdom to Ireland the produce of those countries, to which the bills in question would admit them to a free and immediate trade, all which would be thereby rendered useless, and consequently the strength of the nation be diminished ; and therefore praying, that the bills in question may not pass into a law.

A petition of merchants, importers and manufacturers of hemp, iron, and steel, of Bristol ; setting forth, that the petitioners observe, by the votes, that bills are depending, to permit the exportation of goods (wool and woollen manufactures only excepted) being the produce or manufacture of Ireland, directly from thence to North America, the West Indies, and any British settlements on the coast of Africa, and for allowing the importation of cordage into this kingdom duty-free ; and the petitioners conceive, that should the same pass into a law, the iron, steel, and hemp manufactures of this kingdom will sustain the most fatal injury, and the export trade of their capital manufactories be nearly ruined, if not wholly annihilated ; and that, as the duties on the raw materials of iron, steel, and hemp, now stand between the two kingdoms, and from the vicinity of Ireland to the markets, the cheapness of provisions and labour, with other local advantages, in that kingdom, the petitioners, notwithstanding all their skill in manufacturing, will be underfold at every market, and the furnaces, forges, mills, and other expensive erections, to the amount of millions, will be greatly reduced in value, and some rendered totally useless ; and that the baneful effects of these bills will not rest solely on the merchants and manufacturers, but will extend in a very material degree to the landed interest of this kingdom, the woodlands and collieries will be exceedingly reduced in value, and the poor's rates in many parts of this kingdom will be greatly increased, by the thousands of poor labourers thrown on their respective parishes for want of that employment now afforded them by the iron, steel, and hemp trade, and their dependencies ; and that the petitioners apprehend, the import duties on the rough materials aforementioned will lessen in proportion as the Irish manufactories increase, and such diminution of the revenue creating a new demand will be the more grievous burthen on the public at large, as it will be produced by measures tending to bring on an inability of supporting their present increasing taxes ; and therefore praying, that they may be heard, by themselves or counsel, against so much of these bills as affects them, and that the House will grant them such relief as shall seem meet.

A petition of several persons, inhabitants of Yeovil, Preston, Odcombe, Montacute, East Coker, West Coker, Barwick, East Chinnock, West Chinnock, Hardington, &c. setting forth, that the petitioners observe, by the votes, that bills are depending, to permit the exportation of sail cloth, with other goods, being the produce or manufacture of Ireland, directly from thence to North America, the West Indies, and any British settlements on the coast of Africa ; and for allowing the importation of sail cloth into this kingdom, duty-free ; and alledging that, should such a law take place, the petitioners apprehend, from the great cheapness of provisions and labour in Ireland, its superior situation for foreign trade, and other

other local advantages, that kingdom will soon be enabled to rival Great Britain in the manufacture of that article, in which case the petitioners will be deprived of this important branch of trade, and their labourers and dependants must inevitably be reduced to the lowest distress; and, as this branch of trade is the principal support of a numerous poor, the baneful effects of this bill will not rest solely on the manufacturers, but will be extended in a very material degree to the landed interest of this part of the kingdom; and therefore praying, that this bill may not pass into a law.

A petition of the manufacturers of Aberbrothock; setting forth, that the five bills now depending in Parliament, for the enlargement of the trade of Ireland, will, one or all of them, if passed into a law, prove most destructive and ruinous to the trade and manufactures of Great Britain in general, and of this town and country in particular; and therefore praying the House, to take the trade and manufactures of Great Britain into their most serious consideration and protection, and not suffer any of the above-mentioned five bills to pass into a law.

A petition of merchants, tradesmen, and manufacturers, of Wolverhampton; setting forth, that the various iron manufactories of the said town and its environs are now brought to the greatest perfection; and that the petitioners, with the deepest concern, observe a bill is before the House, for opening a free trade between Ireland and all the British settlements; and that should such a law take place, thousands of our most ingenious manufacturers, now the support of themselves, and of many numerous families, will be deprived of a maintenance, and thereby be induced to emigrate to Ireland for employment, to the manifest injury of the English trade; and therefore praying, that such a bill may not pass into a law.

A petition of gentlemen, merchants, traders, and manufacturers, of the county of Lancaster; setting forth, that the petitioners observe, by the votes, that bills are depending, to permit the importation of sail cloth and cordage, of the manufacture of Ireland, into this kingdom, duty-free; to permit the importation of certain goods from the British plantations in America, or the British settlements on the coast of Africa, into the kingdom of Ireland; to permit the exportation of certain goods therein mentioned directly from Ireland into any British plantation in America, or any British settlement on the coast of Africa; to permit the importation of cotton yarn, the manufacture of Ireland, into this kingdom, duty-free, and to permit the exportation of glass manufactured in Ireland from thence to any place whatsoever, except Great Britain; and that the petitioners apprehend, and are assured, that, in case the bills should pass into a law, the same will be highly, detrimental to the revenues, commercial interests, and navigation, of this kingdom in general, and tend to the utter ruin of the manufactures and mercantile interests of this county in particular, and also greatly affect the landed interest thereof; and therefore praying, that they may be heard, by themselves, or their counsel, against the said bill, or bills, respectively, passing into a law.

A petition of the burgesses, manufacturers, and inhabitants, of Newton, in the county of Lancaster, setting forth, that the petitioners having observed, by the votes, that a bill is depending for opening a free trade between Ireland and all the British settlements; and, as they are thoroughly convinced that such bill is pregnant with consequences highly prejudicial to the interests of the kingdom in general, and of the county of Lancaster in particular; therefore praying, that such bill may not pass into a law.

A petition of gentlemen, clergy, and inhabitants, of Warrington, setting forth, that the petitioners are informed, a bill is depending, for the importation of sail cloth and cordage from Ireland into this kingdom, duty-free; and alledging, that there is a very extensive manufactory of sail cloth carried on in the said town and neighbourhood, wherein many thousands of industrious persons are constantly employed; and, for the better and more commodious carrying on such manufactory, great numbers of warehouses, factories, workshops, and other convenient buildings, applicable to that trade only, have been lately erected at a very great expence; and that the petitioners conceive, the present bill will give such advantages to the trade of Ireland, as will inevitably destroy the manufactory of sail cloth in the said town and neighbourhood which will necessarily oblige the manufacturers and workmen to emigrate, or else many poor persons will be left chargeable upon the parish, and thereby the warehouses, factories, workshops, and buildings, erected for the use of the said trade, will be deserted, and become useless, and consequently the value of lands and estates in the neighbourhood will be greatly reduced; and therefore praying, that the said bill may not pass into a law.

Another petition from the same ; setting forth, that the petitioners are informed, a bill is depending, to permit the exportation directly from Ireland into any British plantation in America, or any British settlement on the coast of Africa, of any goods, wares, and merchandize, being the produce or manufacture of Ireland (wool and woollen manufactures only excepted) and all goods and commodities, of the growth, produce, or manufacture, of Great Britain, which have been, or may be, legally imported from thence into the said kingdom of Ireland, and all foreign certificate goods which have been, or may be, legally imported from Great Britain into Ireland ; and alledging, that there is a very extensive manufactory of sail cloth carried on in the said town and neighbourhood, wherein many thousands of industrious persons are constantly employed, and, for the better and more commodious carrying on such manufactory, great numbers of warehouses, factories, workshops, and other convenient buildings, applicable to that trade only, have been lately erected at a very great expence ; and that the petitioners conceive the present bill will give such advantages to the trade of Ireland, as will inevitably destroy the manufactory of sail cloth in the said town and neighbourhood, which will necessarily oblige the manufacturers and workmen to emigrate, or else many poor persons will be left chargeable upon the parish, and thereby the warehouses, factories, workshops, and buildings, erected for the use of the said trade, will be deserted and become useless, and consequently the value of lands and estates in the neighbourhood will be greatly reduced ; and therefore praying, that the said bill may not pass into a law.

A petition of tallow-chandlers and soapboilers of Liverpool, setting forth, that the petitioners are informed, a bill is depending, to make it lawful to export from the kingdom of Ireland, into any part of the British plantations in America, or the West Indies, any goods, wares, or merchandize, being the produce or manufacture of Ireland (wool and woollen manufactures only excepted ;) and alledging, that the manufacturing of candles and soap for exportation to the West India islands is, to the petitioners, the most important branch of their business, which branch, if the said bill should pass into a law, they apprehend, would in a little time be totally lost to this kingdom ; and that the loss of this valuable part of their trade would be a heavy and irreparable detriment to the petitioners and many others, who would thereby be deprived of the only means of supporting themselves and families ; and therefore praying, that the said bill may not pass into a law, or that such other relief may be granted them as the House shall judge meet.

A petition of merchants and traders in the town of Lancaster, taking notice of the bill to permit the importation of cotton yarn, the manufacture of Ireland, into this kingdom, duty-free ; and setting forth, that the petitioners apprehend, should the said bill pass into a law, it would militate against the manufactures of this country ; and therefore praying, that the said bill may not pass into a law.

A petition of gentlemen, merchants, mariners, traders, and manufacturers, of Liverpool, taking notice of the bill to permit the exportation of glass, manufactured in Ireland, from thence to any place whatsoever, except Great Britain ; and setting forth, that so important a change in the great system of commerce, which has been so long and so successfully a rule of conduct in this kingdom, would, as the petitioners apprehend, occasion much immediate mischief, and be productive of very fatal consequences in more distant times to the essential interests of Britain ; and therefore praying, that the said bill may not pass into a law.

A petition of the merchants and traders of the town of Lancaster, likewise taking notice of the said bill ; and setting forth, that the petitioners apprehend, should the same pass into a law, it will greatly affect several parts of this kingdom, and be very prejudicial to the manufacture thereof in this county ; and therefore praying, that the said bill may not pass into a law.

A petition of merchants and traders of the town of Lancaster, taking notice of the bill, to permit the importation of sail cloth and cordage, of the manufacture of Ireland, into this kingdom duty-free ; and setting forth, that the petitioners apprehend, should the same pass into a law, it would be highly prejudicial to the trade and manufactures of the said town and its neighbourhood ; and therefore praying, that they may be heard, by themselves or counsel, against the said bill.

A petition of several manufacturers of sail cloth, in Warrington, Lancaster, Preston, Kirkham, Liverpool, Prescot, Farnworth, Wigan, and Ulverstone, likewise taking notice of the said bill ; and setting forth, that the establishing the manufacture of sail cloth in Great Britain, both as a branch of manufacture, and as a naval store, for the safety of the state, has

has been considered an object of such national importance, that the legislature have thought it good policy, not only to impose very high duties upon the importation of foreign sail cloth, but also to grant bounties upon the exportation of British sail cloth, by means whereof that branch of manufacture is become established, and the British manufacturers are enabled to supply his Majesty's navy, as well as the export trade, at all times, with expedition and certainty; and representing to the House, that a duty of three pounds *per* ton, and upwards, is paid upon the importation of hemp into Great Britain, but that a duty of little more than one pound *per* ton only is paid upon the importation thereof into Ireland, and that considerable quantities of flax and hemp are grown in Ireland, by which means the Irish have the raw materials cheaper than the British manufacturer; and as the prices of provisions and labour are much lower in Ireland than in Great Britain, and their taxes comparatively light and easy, the Irish are able to manufacture sail cloth cheaper than it can be done in Great Britain; and that, relying on the stability and parliamentary regulations, the petitioners have expended great sums of money, in procuring machines, implements, and utensils, for carrying on the said trade extensively, by which many thousands of his Majesty's subjects are employed, and comfortably supported; but, should the said bill pass into a law, the petitioners apprehend, the said machines, implements, and utensils, will be rendered useless, as they are not applicable to any other branch of manufacture; and, moreover, the public will sustain great inconvenience, uncertainty, and delay, in time of war, by establishing the manufacture of so essential an article of naval store in Ireland, from whence it must be brought for the supply of the British navy, and be subject to the depredation of our enemies, commerce and navigation must suffer considerably, and the landed interest, so nearly connected therewith, cannot escape unhurt; and therefore praying, that they may be heard, by themselves, or counsel, against the said bill, and that the same may not pass into a law.

A petition of gentlemen, merchants, mariners, traders, and manufacturers, of Liverpool, likewise taking notice of the said bill; and setting forth, that so important a change in that system, by which the commerce, manufactures and revenue, of this kingdom have been so long and so successfully regulated, would, as the petitioners apprehend, in the present distressful situation of trade, occasion much immediate mischief, and be productive of very fatal consequences in more distant times to the landed interest, the naval force, the manufactures, and the commerce, of Britain; and therefore praying, that they may be heard, by themselves or their counsel, against the said bill.

A petition of gentlemen, clergy, and freeholders, of the county of Chester, assembled at a county meeting, taking notice of the bill to permit the importation of certain goods from the British plantations in America, or the British settlements on the coast of Africa, into the kingdom of Ireland; and setting forth, that the petitioners conceive, should the said bill pass into a law, the same would be extremely detrimental to the commercial, and landed interests of this county, and the public revenues of the kingdom in general would be thereby greatly diminished; and therefore praying, that they may be heard, by their counsel, against the said bill, and that the same may not pass into a law.

A petition of gentlemen, tradesmen, merchants, and land owners, of Stockport, against the said bill, setting forth, that the petitioners conceive, should the same pass into a law, it would essentially injure the trade of Great Britain, by greatly diminishing both the imports and exports, and consequently hurting the public revenues of this kingdom; and therefore praying, that they may be heard, by their counsel, against the said bill, and that the same may not pass into a law.

A petition of gentlemen, tradesmen, merchants, and land owners, of Manchester, against the said bill, setting forth, that the petitioners conceive, should the same pass into a law, it would be extremely detrimental to the land and commercial interests of the kingdom of Great Britain, and tend to diminish the public revenues of this kingdom; and therefore praying, that they may be heard, by their counsel, against the said bill, and that the same may not pass into a law.

A petition of gentlemen, clergy, land owners, manufacturers, and callicoe printers, of Blackburn, containing the same allegations and prayer as the last preceeding petition.

A petition of the mayor, bailiffs, and common council, of Liverpool likewise taking notice of the said bill; and setting forth, that great sums of money have been raised and expended, by virtue of several acts of parliament for the making of docks, erecting of lights, and rendering the port and harbour of Liverpool as safe and commodious as possible; and that, relying on the faith of the House, several persons have been induced to advance considerable

sums of money, for the making and erecting such docks, lights, and other improvements, for the conveniences of commerce, on the credit of the duties payable by virtue of such acts; and that, in consequence of such conveniences and improvements, for the benefit of trade, numbers of foreigners, and others, have resorted to, and settled here, for the purposes of carrying on different branches of commerce, to the great increase and emolument of the town of Liverpool, and the revenues of this kingdom; and that the number of ships and vessels, which, for these seven years last past, only, have sailed, or been employed in the trade, from hence to the British plantations in America, and to the British settlements on the coast of Africa, amounts on an average, yearly, to 230, or thereabouts; and that the number of ships and vessels, which, for these seven years last past only, have sailed, or been employed in the trade from hence to Ireland (exclusive of those employed in the coasting trade from hence to other ports in Great Britain,) amounts on an average, yearly, to 528, or thereabouts; and that, on only allowing five men to navigate each vessel, the number of seamen employed in such trade (for that period only) amounts on an average, yearly, to 2640, or thereabouts; and, as the coasting trade has been ever considered as the chief nursery for seamen, it is humbly submitted to the House, whether it would not be rather dangerous to hazard the loss of a trade so beneficial in its consequences; and the petitioners are desirous, that every encouragement may be given to the commerce and manufactures of Ireland, consistent with the true interests and welfare of Great Britain; and therefore praying, that the said bill may not pass into a law, as thereby the securities of such persons as have advanced the whole, or a considerable part of their fortunes on the credit of the said dock and light duties, would be very considerably diminished, thousands of artificers, and others, inhabiting this town and neighbourhood, deprived of the means of their subsistence, whereby the poor rates would become insupportable, and the docks, lights, and other improvements, of the port of Liverpool, constructed at an immense expence (and which may vie with any in Europe,) be rendered, in a great measure, useless, and this once flourishing town reduced to its original insignificance; and that the petitioners may be heard, by themselves, or their counsel, against the said bill passing into a law.

A petition of gentlemen, merchants, mariners, traders, and manufacturers of Liverpool, likewise taking notice of the said bill, and setting forth, that so important a change in that system, by which the commerce, navigation, and revenue of this kingdom, have been so long and so successfully regulated, would as the petitioners apprehend, in the present distressful situation of trade, occasion much immediate mischief, and be productive of very fatal consequences, in more distant times, to the population, revenue, naval force, and landed interest, of Britain, and therefore praying, that they may be heard, by themselves, or their counsel, against the said bill.

A petition of merchants and traders of Lancaster, likewise taking notice of the said bill, and setting forth, that the petitioners apprehend, should the same pass into a law, it would be extremely injurious to the commerce, manufactures, and navigation, of this kingdom, affect in its consequences the landed interest, and be ruinous of the trade of the said town in particular; and therefore praying, that they may be heard, by themselves, or counsel, against the said bill passing into a law.

A petition of James Buchanan, esquire, in the name and on behalf of merchants, traders, and manufacturers, of Glasgow, likewise taking notice of the said bill, and setting forth, that, should the same pass into a law, it would be highly prejudicial to the trade and manufactures of Great Britain in general, and more particularly of the city of Glasgow, by disabling the merchants, traders, and manufacturers, of that city from carrying on hereafter, on equal terms, their trade with the British plantations in America, now their first and capital branch of commerce; and in which, on the faith of the laws now in being, they have invested the greatest part of their fortunes; and therefore, on behalf of the merchants, traders, and manufacturers, of the city of Glasgow, praying for leave to be heard, by himself or counsel, against the said bill.

A petition of gentlemen, clergy, and freeholders, of the county of Chester, assembled at county meeting, taking notice of the bill to permit the exportation of certain goods therein mentioned, directly from Ireland into any British plantation in America, or any British settlement on the coast of Africa; and setting forth that the petitioners conceive, should the same pass into a law, it would be extremely detrimental to the commercial and landed interests of the said county, and that the public revenues of the kingdom in general would be thereby greatly

greatly diminished ; and therefore praying, that they may be heard, by their counsel, against the said bill, and that the same may not pass into a law.

A petition of gentlemen, clergy, merchants, and manufacturers, of Stockport ; setting forth, that the petitioners observe, by the votes, that a bill hath been brought in, to permit the exportation of any goods, wares, and merchandizes, being the produce or manufacture of Ireland (wool and woollen manufactures only excepted) and of all goods and commodities, of the growth, produce, or manufacture, of Great Britain, which have been, or may be, legally imported from thence into the said kingdom of Ireland, and of all foreign and certificate goods which have been, or may be legally imported from Great Britain into Ireland, directly from Ireland, into any of the British plantations in America, or the West Indies, or into any of the settlements belonging to Great Britain on the coast of Africa ; and that, should the said bill pass into a law, it would be exceedingly oppressive, and even ruinous, to thousands of the industrious manufacturers of the said town and neighbourhood, who are at present employed in making checks, and various other goods, which require large quantities of linen yarn, which they import from Ireland, to the great advantage of the inhabitants of that kingdom, where the flax is grown, and where the same is spun into yarn, and bought with ready money by the English manufacturers, who allow to their factors in Ireland two *per cent.* commission money, and pay to the Irish revenue one halfpenny *per* pound duty ; and that this trade, the petitioners see clearly, would by the above law be taken from them, for, as the price of labour in Ireland bears so small a proportion to that in England, they would be able to undersell the English both at home and in every foreign market, which would depreciate the value of their estates, and leave them such a very great number of poor, that it would be impossible to support them as the law requires, and contribute their share towards easing the great burthens of the state ; and therefore praying, that they may be heard, by their counsel, against the said bill, and that the same may not pass into a law.

A petition of gentlemen, tradesmen, merchants, and manufacturers, of Manchester ; setting forth, that the petitioners are informed, a bill has been brought into the House, to permit the exportation of any goods, wares, or merchandizes, being the produce or manufacture of Ireland (wool and woollen manufactures only excepted) and of all goods and commodities, of the growth, produce, or manufacture, of Great Britain, which have been, or may be, legally imported from thence into the said kingdom of Ireland, and of all foreign certificate goods which have been, or may be, legally imported from Great Britain into Ireland, directly from Ireland, into any of the British plantations in America or the West Indies, or into any of the settlements belonging to Great Britain on the coast of Africa ; and alledging, that the linen manufactures, which have been at great expence established, and are now carried on in the said town and neighbourhood, will be ruined, and the cotton and other manufactures will be very greatly injured, should the said bill pass into a law, and thereby the advantages to which the manufacturers have, by their labour and industry, intitled themselves, will be taken from them, the poor will be, in a great measure, deprived of the means of supporting themselves and families, the value of lands, which depends on the success and prosperity of trade, will be extremely reduced, and the land owners and inhabitants will be rendered unable to support the great weight of public burthens, to which they at present so amply contribute ; and therefore praying, that they may be heard, by their counsel, against the said bill, and that the same may not pass into a law, or that the petitioners may have such other relief as to the House shall seem most expedient.

A petition of gentlemen, clergy, land owners, manufacturers, and callicoe-printers, of Blackburn, setting forth, that the petitioners are informed, that a bill hath been brought into the House, to permit the exportation of any goods, wares, or merchandizes, being the produce or manufacture of Ireland [wool and woollen manufactures only excepted] and of all goods and commodities, of the growth, produce, or manufacture, of Great Britain, which have been, or may be, legally imported from thence into the said kingdom of Ireland, and of all foreign certificate goods which have been, or may be, legally imported from Great Britain into Ireland, directly from Ireland, into any of the British plantations in America or the West-Indies, or into any of the settlements belonging to Great Britain on the coast of Africa ; and alledging, that the trade of this town and neighbourhood, which chiefly consists of cottons and callicoes manufactured from Irish linen yarn and West-India cotton, and have been, at great expence established, will be totally ruined, should the said bill pass into a law ; and therefore praying, that they may be heard, by their counsel, against the said bill, and that the same may not pass into a law.

A petition of several manufacturers of sail-cloth, of Warrington, Lancaster, Preston, Kirkham, Liverpool, Prescot, Farnworth, Wigan, and Ulverstone, setting forth, that the petitioners are much alarmed and concerned to see, by the votes, that a bill has been brought into the House, to permit the exportation of certain goods therein mentioned directly from Ireland into any British plantation in America, or any British settlement on the coast of Africa; and the petitioners conceive, that the said bill is meant to allow the exportation of Irish sail-cloth; and that the establishing the manufacture of sail-cloth within Great Britain, both as a branch of manufacture, and as a naval store for the safety of the state, has been considered by the legislator as an object of great national importance; and that the fluctuating situation of the sail-cloth trade subjects the manufacturer to many losses and inconveniences, from which other branches of manufacture are free; and that, in time of peace, their principal dependence and support arises from the export trade to the British plantations, and the settlements belonging to Great Britain on the coast of Africa; but, if the proposed bill should pass into a law, the petitioners conceive, that the sail-cloth manufacture of this kingdom would be greatly prejudiced, and the British navy thereby reduced to the necessity of depending upon Ireland for a supply, which in time of war will be subject to the depredation of our enemies, as well as to many other disappointments; and therefore praying, that the said bill may not pass into a law as it now stands; and that they may be heard, by themselves or counsel, against the same, or so much thereof as can affect the article of British made sail-cloth.

A petition of merchants and manufacturers of Preston, setting forth, that the petitioners observe, by the votes, that a bill is brought in, for the exportation from the kingdom of Ireland, directly into any of the British plantations in America, or the West-Indies, or into any of the settlements belonging to Great Britain on the coast of Africa, in vessels which may lawfully trade to and from those places, any goods, wares, and merchandizes, being the produce or manufacture of Ireland (wool and woollen manufactures only excepted) and all goods and commodities, of the growth, produce, or manufacture, of Great Britain, which have been, or may be, legally imported from thence into the said kingdom of Ireland, and all foreign certificate goods which have been, or may be, legally imported from Great Britain into Ireland; and alledging, that the linen manufactures, which have been, at great expence established, and are now carried on in the town and neighbourhood of Preston, will be greatly injured, if not altogether ruined, should the said bill pass into a law, the advantages, to which the manufacturers have by their labour and industry intitled themselves, will be thereby taken from them, the poor will be deprived of the means of supporting themselves and families, and the value of land in that part of the kingdom, which depends on the prosperity of trade, will not only be extremely reduced, but the inhabitants will be rendered unable to support the great weight of public burthens to which they at present so amply and chearfully contribute; and therefore praying, that they may be heard, by themselves or their counsel, against the said bill; and that the same may not pass into a law, or that the petitioners may have such other relief as to the House shall seem most expedient.

A petition of the mayor, bailiffs, and common council, of Liverpool, taking notice of the bill to permit the exportation of certain goods therein mentioned directly from Ireland, into any British plantation in America, or any British settlement on the coast of Africa; and setting forth, that great sums of money have been raised and expended, by virtue of several acts of parliament, for the making of docks, erecting of lights, and rendering the port and harbour of Liverpool as safe and commodious as possible; and that, relying on the faith of the House, several persons have been induced to advance considerable sums of money, for the making and erecting such docks, lights, and other improvements, for the conveniences of commerce, on the credit of the duties arising and payable by virtue of such acts; and that, in consequence of such conveniences and improvements, for the benefit of trade, numbers of foreigners, and others, have resorted to, and settled there, for the purposes of carrying on the different branches of commerce, to the great increase and emolument of the town of Liverpool, and the revenues of this kingdom; and that the number of ships and vessels, which, for these seven years last past only, have sailed or been employed in the trade from hence to the British plantations in America, and to the British settlements on the coast of Africa, amounts on an average, yearly, to 230, or thereabouts; and that the number of ships and vessels, which, for these seven years last past only, have sailed or been employed in the trade from hence to Ireland, (exclusive of those employed in the

the coasting trade from hence to other ports in Great Britain) amounts, on an average, yearly, to 528, or thereabouts; and that, on only allowing five men to navigate each vessel, the number of seamen employed in such trade (for that period only) amounts, on an average, yearly, to 2640, or thereabouts, and, as the coasting trade has been ever considered as the chief nursery for seamen, it is humbly submitted to the House, whether it would not be rather dangerous to hazard the loss of a trade so beneficial in its consequences; and the petitioners are desirous, that every encouragement may be given to the commerce and manufactures of Ireland, consistent with the true interests and welfare of Great Britain; and therefore praying, that the said bill may not pass into a law, as thereby the securities of such persons as have advanced the whole, or a considerable part, of their fortunes on the credit of the said dock and light duties, would be very considerably diminished, thousands of artificers, and others, inhabiting the town and neighbourhood, deprived of the means of their subsistence, whereby the poor rates would become insupportable, and the docks, lights, and other improvements of the port of Liverpool, constructed at an immense expence (and which may vie with any in Europe) be rendered, in a great measure, useless, and this once flourishing town reduced to its original insignificance; and that they may be heard, by themselves, or their counsel, against the said bill passing into a law.

A petition of gentlemen, merchants, mariners, traders, and manufacturers, of Liverpool, likewise taking notice of the said bill, and setting forth, that such an infraction of the act of navigation, and a change so important in that system, by which the commerce, manufactures, and revenue, of this kingdom have been so long and so successfully regulated, would, as the petitioners apprehend, occasion much immediate mischief, and be productive of very fatal consequences in more distant times to the revenue, population, landed interest, naval force, manufactures, and commerce, of Britain; and therefore praying, that they may be heard by themselves, or their counsel, against the said bill.

A petition of tallow-chandlers and soapboilers, of Lancaster, setting forth, that the petitioners are employed in the manufacturing of candles and soap, which they dispose of for exportation to the West India islands, and are in a great measure supplied with tallow necessary for carrying on their respective manufactories from Ireland, where they pay a duty on the exportation thereof to England, and also are subject to the freight, premium of insurance, and other charges accruing thereupon; and that Ireland, by being exempt from these charges, will come at the materials for those manufactures upon much cheaper terms, and would, in case the said bill pass into a law, entirely engross the export trade thereof to themselves; and that the loss of this valuable branch of business would be extremely injurious to the petitioners, as it is the natural and only vocation by which they have supported themselves and families, and employed numbers of people to the benefit of the community in general; and therefore praying, that they may be heard, by themselves or counsel, against the said bill passing into a law.

A petition of the merchants and traders of Lancaster; setting forth, that the petitioners apprehend, should the said bill pass into a law, it would be extremely injurious to the commerce, manufactures, and navigation, of this kingdom, affect in its consequences the landed interest, and be ruinous to the trade of the said town in particular; and therefore praying, that they may be heard, by themselves or counsel, against the said bill passing into a law.

A petition of James Buchanan, esq. in the name of merchants, traders, and manufacturers, of Glasgow; likewise taking notice of the said bill; and setting forth, that the petitioner apprehends, if the same shall pass into a law, it will be highly prejudicial to the trade and manufactures of Great Britain in general, and more particularly to the city of Glasgow, by disabling the merchants, traders, and manufacturers, of that city, from carrying on hereafter, on equal terms, their trade with the British plantations in America, now their first and capital branch of commerce, and in which, on the faith of the laws now in being, they have invested the greatest part of their fortunes; and therefore, on behalf of the merchants, traders, and manufacturers, of the city of Glasgow, praying for leave to be heard, by himself or counsel, against the said bill.

A petition of gentlemen, tradesmen, merchants, and land owners, of Manchester; taking notice of the bill to permit the importation of cotton yarn, the manufacture of Ireland, into this kingdom, duty-free; and setting forth, that the petitioners conceive, should the said bill pass into a law, the same would be extremely detrimental to the land and commercial interests

terests of the kingdom of Great Britain, and would tend to diminish the public revenues of this kingdom; and therefore praying, that they may be heard, by their counsel, against the said bill, and that the same may not pass into a law.

A petition of gentlemen, clergy, land owners, manufacturers, and callicoe printers, of Blackburn, containing the same allegations and prayer as the last preceeding petition.

A petition of merchants, and manufacturers of Preston, likewise taking notice of the said bill; and setting forth, that the cotton manufactures, which have been at a great expence established, and are now carried on, in the town and neighbourhood of Preston, will be greatly injured if not altogether ruined, should the same pass into a law, the advantages to which the manufacturers have, by their labour, and industry, intitled themselves, will be thereby taken from them, the poor will be deprived of the means of supporting themselves and families, and the value of land in this part of the kingdom, which depends on the prosperity of trade, will not only be extremely reduced, but the inhabitants will be rendered unable to support the great weight of public burthens to which they at present so amply and chearfully contribute; and therefore praying, that they may be heard, by themselves or counsel, against the said bill, and that the same may not pass into a law, or that the petitioners may have such other relief as to the House shall seem most expedient.

A petition of James Buchanan, esquire, in the name of merchants, traders, and manufacturers, of Glasgow, taking notice of the bill to permit the exportation of glass, manufactured in Ireland, from thence to any place whatsoever except Great Britain; and setting forth, that the petitioner apprehends, if the same shall pass into a law, it will be highly prejudicial to the trade and manufacture of Great Britain in general, and more particularly to the city of Glasgow, as from the inequality of taxes, the low price of labour, and the great plenty and cheapness of provisions, in Ireland, the merchants and manufacturers of that kingdom will be enabled to sell this commodity, at foreign markets, cheaper than the merchants and manufacturers of this country; and therefore, on behalf of the merchants, traders, and manufacturers, of the city of Glasgow, praying for leave to be heard, by himself or counsel against the said bill.

A petition of several persons of Bridport, Beamister, Broadwindsor, manufacturers of sail cloth and cordage, setting forth, that the petitioners, since they presumed to petition the House against the bill for permitting all sail cloth and cordage of the manufacture of Ireland to be imported into this kingdom free of duty, have further observed that another bill is depending, for permitting, in like manner, any goods, wares, and merchandize, being the produce or manufacture of Ireland (wool and woollen manufactures only excepted) to be exported from the kingdom of Ireland directly into any of the British plantations, in America, or the West Indies, or into any of the settlements belonging to Great Britain on the coast of Africa; and that sail cloth and cordage being of course included, the consequence of the said bill, jointly with that of the other, should they both pass into laws, the petitioners conceive, will be not a partial rivalry only, but the entire ruin of those manufactures in this kingdom, at least in this part of it, as the Irish, besides the means of manufacturing these commodities cheaper, appear to possess such advantages, in point of situation, and other circumstances, for exports to the plantations and settlements, as must enable them to undersell us abroad in a still greater degree than at home; and therefore praying, that the said bill may not pass into a law.

A petition of the tallow-chandlers of London, setting forth, that the petitioners observe by the votes, that a bill is depending, to permit the exportation of certain goods, therein mentioned, directly from Ireland into any British plantation in America, or any British settlement on the coast of Africa; and that, should such a bill pass into a law, the petitioners will be greatly injured, as the trade of exporting candles from hence would thereby be entirely lost; and therefore praying, that such bill may not pass into a law.

A petition of gentlemen, merchants, traders, and manufacturers, of Lancaster, taking notice of the bill to permit the importation of sail cloth and cordage, of the manufacture of Ireland, into this kingdom, duty-free; and setting forth, that the petitioners apprehend, and are assured, that, in case the said bill should pass into a law, the same will be highly detrimental to the revenues, commercial interests, and navigation of this kingdom in general, and tend to the utter ruin of the manufactures and mercantile interests of the county of Lancaster in particular, and also greatly affect the landed interest thereof; and therefore praying, that they may be heard, by themselves, or their counsel, against the said bill passing into a law.

A petition

A petition of James Buchanan, esquire, in the name of merchants, traders, and manufacturers, of Glasgow, likewise taking notice of the said bill; and setting forth, that the petitioner apprehends, if the same shall pass into a law, it will be highly prejudicial to the manufactures of this country in general, and to the city and neighbourhood of Glasgow in particular; and therefore, in the name, and on behalf, of the merchants, traders, and manufacturers, of the city of Glasgow, praying, that he may be heard, by himself or counsel, against the said bill.

A petition of gentlemen, merchants, traders, and manufacturers, of Lancaster, taking notice of the bill to permit the importation of certain goods from the British plantations in America, or the British settlements on the coast of Africa, into the kingdom of Ireland; and setting forth, that the petitioners apprehend, and are assured, that, in case the said bill should pass into a law, the same will be highly detrimental to the revenues, commercial interests, and navigation, of this kingdom in general, and tend to the utter ruin of the manufactures and mercantile interests of the county of Lancaster in particular, and also greatly affect the landed interest thereof; and therefore praying, that they may be heard, by themselves or their counsel, against the said bill passing into a law.

A petition of master, wardens, and commonalty, of the Society of chandlers and soap-makers, of Bristol, under their common-seal, taking notice of the bill to permit the exportation of certain goods, therein mentioned, directly from Ireland into any British plantation in America, or any British settlement on the coast of Africa; and setting forth, that, should the same pass into a law, his Majesty's revenue will be greatly injured, and the export trade of soap and candles from this kingdom totally lost, as tallow, a principal raw material used in England for that manufacture, as also kelp, are imported from Ireland, under an export duty in that kingdom, besides other charges of commission, freight, and insurance, and kelp, together with salt, oil, and barilla (other materials of which soap is made) are chargeable with heavy duties here, and very little in Ireland; and therefore praying, that such bill may not pass into a law, and that they may be heard by themselves or counsel.

A petition of gentlemen, merchants, traders, and manufacturers, of the county of Lancaster; likewise taking notice of the said bill; and setting forth, that the petitioners apprehend, and are assured, that, in case the said bill should pass into a law, the same will be highly detrimental to the revenues, commercial interests, and navigation of this kingdom in general, and tend to the utter ruin of the manufactures and mercantile interests of the county of Lancaster in particular, and also greatly affect the landed interest thereof; and therefore praying, that they may be heard, by themselves or their counsel, against the said bill passing into a law.

A petition of gentlemen, merchants, traders, and manufacturers, of the county of Lancaster; taking notice of the bill to permit the importation of cotton yarn, the manufacture of Ireland, into this kingdom, duty-free; and setting forth, that the petitioners apprehend, and are assured, that, in case the said bill should pass into a law, the same will be highly detrimental to the revenues, commercial interests, and navigation, of this kingdom in general, and tend to the utter ruin of the manufactures and mercantile interests of the county of Lancaster in particular, and also greatly affect the landed interest thereof; and therefore praying, that they may be heard, by themselves or their counsel, against the said bill passing into a law.

A petition of gentlemen, merchants, traders, and manufacturers, of Lancaster; taking notice of the bill to permit the exportation of glass, manufactured in Ireland, from thence to any place whatsoever, except Great Britain: and setting forth, that the petitioners apprehend, and are assured, that, in case the said bill should pass into a law, the same will be highly detrimental to the revenues, commercial interests, and navigation of this kingdom in general, and tend to the utter ruin of the manufactures and mercantile interests of the county of Lancaster in particular, and also greatly affect the landed interest thereof; and therefore praying, that they may be heard, by themselves or their counsel, against the said bill passing into a law.

A petition of the glass manufacturers of Bristol; taking notice of the bill to permit the exportation of glass, manufactured in Ireland, from thence to any place whatsoever, except Great Britain; and setting forth, that the petitioners apprehend, if the same should pass into a law, it would tend greatly to the prejudice of the petitioners, and, in a degree, to the ruin of their trade and manufacture, which they have with great difficulty, and at vast expence, brought to its present perfection; and that the manufacturers in Ireland are not charged with any duty on glass; that they have kelp (a very considerable article in the glass manufactory)

at about one half the price it costs the petitioners ; and the petitioners do not, in crown or flint glass, draw back on exportation more than half the duty they pay : and that these great advantages will enable them to undersell the petitioners at foreign markets, and must deprive them of that trade, which is the very life and being of the glass manufactory in the city of Bristol ; and that the petitioners conceive, it will likewise be a considerable loss to the revenue, as the kelp used in the manufactory of glass is chiefly the produce of Ireland, and, upon the importation of it into England, a considerable duty is paid ; and that these alarming circumstances induce the petitioners to beg that the House will take the premises into their consideration, and afford them such relief as shall seem meet.

A petition of the sugar refiners of London ; setting forth, that the petitioners find there are bills depending before the House, respecting the giving leave for a free importation of goods, wares, and merchandize, of the growth, product, or manufacture, of the British plantations in America, and the West Indies, or of any of the settlements belonging to Great Britain on the coast of Africa, and which are required to be imported from thence into Great Britain ; and the petitioners conceive, that, if the said bills should in their present form pass into a law, they would thereby be greatly injured ; and therefore praying the House, to take into their serious consideration the comparative view of the cost of British Muscovado sugars in Great Britain and Ireland, whereby it will appear, that the people of Ireland do at present import sugars at a much lower rate than the people of England ; and therefore the inhabitants of Ireland, in respect to that commodity, being not aggrieved, the petitioners pray, that the word "sugar" may be included in the exceptions of the bill.

A petition of the manufacturers of glass, in London, and in the counties of Middlesex, Surrey, and Stafford ; taking notice of the bill to permit the exportation of certain goods therein mentioned, directly from Ireland into any British plantation in America, or any British settlement on the coast of Africa ; and setting forth, that the petitioners apprehend, in case the said bill should pass into a law, the same would be very injurious to, if not the total ruin of, themselves, in the manufacture of glass in particular, and a great loss to the revenue and commercial interests of this kingdom ; and therefore praying, that the House will permit the petitioners to be heard, by themselves or their counsel, in opposition to the said bill ; or that such relief may be granted to them as shall seem fit.

A petition of the mayor, aldermen, and common council, merchants, and inhabitants, of Exeter ; setting forth, that the petitioners being informed, that several bills are depending before the House, granting an extension of the trade of Ireland ; and notwithstanding the petitioners conceive the exceptions prohibiting the exportation of woollens are to continue in force, yet they beg leave to express their fears, that, should the said bills pass into laws, the clandestine export of Irish woollens will greatly increase ; and the petitioners are very apprehensive, from a comparative view of the prices of labour and provisions, and the difference of the taxes in both kingdoms, that such laws will be productive of many other evils, and occasion inexpressible injury and irreparable loss to this nation ; the petitioners therefore, dreading such fatal consequences, but sincerely wishing their sister kingdom may have every relief this country can properly grant, pray, that the further prosecution of the said bills may be deferred until next session of Parliament, that, in the mean time, objects so important and extensive may be thoroughly examined and digested.

All these petitions were at different times presented to the House and read ; and all ordered to lie upon the table.

May 7.

No debate.

May 8.

Sir William
Meredith.

Sir William Meredith moved, that an humble address be presented to his Majesty, to have all letters or extracts of letters laid before the House, that may have been received by any of his Majesty's ministers or commissioners of the admiralty,

admiralty, or other boards, relating to the equipment of the fleet that hath lately sailed from Toulon.

Agreed to.

Adjourned to May 11.

May 11.

Heard counsel and evidence on the Irish bill. When those for this day were finished,

Colonel *Barre* moved, that an humble address be presented to his Majesty, requesting that his Majesty will be graciously pleased to give directions that the remains of WILLIAM PITT, EARL OF CHATHAM, be interred at the public expence; [and that a monument be erected] in the collegiate church of St. Peter, Westminster, to the memory of that great and excellent statesman, with an inscription, expressive of the sentiments of the people on so great and irreparable a loss, and to assure his Majesty that this House would make good the expence attending the same.

[The Earl died this morning, at his seat at Hayes, in Kent.]

Right Hon. *Thomas Townshend* seconded the motion.

Mr. *Rigby*, after expressing his great respect for that statesman's unrivalled talents, and his regret that his country should be deprived of them at a time when they were so much wanted by her, declared, that no man in the House, revered him living more than he did, though he sometimes differed from him in politics; but the noble Earl's virtues had made an indelible impression on his mind, and the very last words he ever spoke in Parliament, particularly commanded his gratitude and admiration. He therefore certainly would vote for the motion, if the Honourable gentlemen should think proper to persist in it; but with some diffidence he begged leave to say, that he thought a monument to his memory would be a more eligible, as well as a more lasting testimony of the public gratitude than the defraying of his funeral honours.

Mr. *Townshend* would have spoken in reply to Mr. *Rigby*, but sorrow choked his utterance, and he found himself obliged to sit down; recovering himself however in a few minutes, he delivered a short but most feeling eulogium on the merits of the deceased peer, and concluded by expressing his affliction, that he should be snatched from us at a time when his country was in so much want of his abilities.

Mr. Dunning.

Mr. *Dunning* said, he could not suppose there could be two opinions in the House on such a motion, in point of principle, though there might be some difference of sentiment upon the modes of expressing our sensations; for his part, he thought the two propositions were in no degree opposite, and, therefore, he moved as an amendment that the monument should be included as an object of address to his Majesty.

Lord North.

Lord *North* then entering in great haste, declared his happiness in arriving time enough to give his vote for the motion, which he hoped would be carried unanimously, and he lamented, that he had not breath enough, from the hurry in which he came, to express himself with the degree of respect, which he wished to shew on so great an occasion.

Agreed to unanimously.

May 12.

No debate.

May 13.

Lord North.

Lord *North*, by his Majesty's command, assured the House, that his Majesty readily agreed to their address, respecting the interment of the Earl of Chatham, and the erecting a monument to the memory of that great and excellent statesman.

Lord John Cavendish.

Lord *John Cavendish* said, he hoped the public gratitude would not stop here. As that invaluable man had, whilst in the nation's service neglected his own, and though he had the greatest opportunity of enriching himself, had never made any provision for his family, he hoped an ample provision would be made for the descendents of so honest and able a minister.

Lord North.

Lord *North* coincided heartily in the noble Lord's wish; and Lord Nugent, Mr. Byng, Mr. Fox, Mr. Montagu, &c. expressed the warmest eulogiums on the virtue of the deceased peer, who had always suffered his private interest to be swallowed up in his attachment to the public good.

Mr. T.

Townshend.

Mr. *T. Townshend* moved an address to his Majesty, expressive of the wishes of Parliament in this point, and assuring his Majesty, that whatever bounties he should bestow on the family of the deceased Earl, should be cheerfully provided for by that House. The motion passed unanimously.

Counsel were called in against the Irish bills.

May

May 14.

Sir *George Savile* moved for leave to bring in a bill for the repeal of certain penalties and disabilities provided in an act of the 10th and 11th of William the Third; intituled an act to prevent the further growth of popery.. As an incentive to the repeal of those penalties inflicting such violent severities on papists, he adverted to the peaceable and loyal behaviour of that part of the people under a government, which, though it was not severe in enforcing, yet suffered such intolerable penalties and disqualifications to stand against them on the statutes. As an instance of the little danger there was likely to arise from this liberal procedure of Parliament, he mentioned their late loyal address to the crown, in which they not only expressed their obedience to the government under which they lived, but a degree of attachment to the constitution upon which the civil rights of this country have been established by the Revolution, which placed the present family upon the throne of these kingdoms; and as a further security he proposed that a sufficient test might be formed by which they should bind themselves to the support of the civil government by law established.

Mr. *Dunning* seconded the motion, and went into a legal discussion of the principles, object, and past operation of the bill which was intended to be repealed. He took up the penalties of the bills under three separate heads. First: the punishment of popish priests or jesuits who should be found to teach or officiate in the services of that church, which acts were felony in foreigners, and high treason in the natives of this kingdom.—Secondly, the forfeitures of popish heirs, who had received their education abroad, which gave their estates to the next protestant heir, and the power given to the son or other nearest relation, being a protestant, to take the possession of the papist's estate, during his life—and lastly, the depriving papists from acquiring any real property by purchase—which word, in the legal meaning, had a much greater latitude than in the ordinary sense; for it applied to all real property acquired by any other means than that of descent.

These were the objects of the proposed repeal. Some of them had now ceased to be necessary, and others were at all times a disgrace to humanity. The imprisonment of a popish priest for life, on the account of his officiating in the services of his religion, was horrible in its nature; and to an Englishman,

Englishman, must ever be held as infinitely worse than death. Such a law in times of so great liberality, and when so little was apprehended from those people, called loudly for repeal; and he begged to recommend to the House, that even then they were not left at liberty to exercise their functions; but were from former laws restrained by a punishment of a year's imprisonment, and by a heavy fine.

The mildness of government had hitherto softened the rigour of the law in the practice, but it was to be considered that the Roman Catholic priests were still left at the mercy of the lowest and basest of mankind; for on the complaint of any informing constable, the magisterial and judicial powers were bound to enforce all the shameful penalties of the act. With respect to the encouragement held out by it, to those children who are base enough to lay their hands on the estates of their parents, or which debars a man from the honest acquisition of property; it needed only to be mentioned in order to excite the indignation of the House.

Mr. Thurlow.

The Attorney General [Mr. Thurlow] declared he had no intention of opposing the bill; but he divided its object into four heads, and wished that the House would not go into the consideration of repealing this or that obnoxious clause in this or that bill; but that it would take up the principle upon which the laws on each head were enacted, and so modify the indulgence to be given the Roman Catholics, as not to lose sight of the civil objects for which they were framed.

The first proposition he said was the preaching and teaching of priests; the second the education of children abroad; for this was different from the teaching meant in the first proposition, as one was the department of the priest or Jesuit, the other of the parent in directing his child's education; the third was the forfeiture of infants educated abroad to the Protestant next of kin; and the last was the prevention of holding acquired property. Of all these he held as the most shocking that which debarred the parent from exercising the noblest and best of all affections, the educating of his child in the manner that he thought best for the happiness of his beloved offspring. It was arming the vices of a family against its domestic œconomy, and could not but excite detestation in every breast in that House. To remedy so glaring an evil required little hesitation; but to repeal the penalties against popish priests exercising their functions freely, required some consideration. The House

was

was first to determine how far they thought it safe to allow the free preaching and teaching of that religion. When this point had been settled, acts could be framed accordingly : Then the business could be effected on fixed principles, and not by piece-meal.

Lord *Beauchamp* expressed his satisfaction that this motion Lord Beau-
champ. appeared so agreeable to the House in general, that it was not likely to meet one dissentient voice ; and it gave him the more pleasure at this time, as he thought the commercial advantages that Parliament now meant to bestow on Ireland would be of very little use to that country, unless it was accompanied by a repeal of their penal laws, which so long depressed three-fourths of the people there ; and this bill he hoped would, when passed, be an example to the Irish Parliament, in whose power it was to give that relief to their brethren ; and he was sorry to say, he thought though their faith was in some degree pledged for the effect of some such measure, nothing had yet been done for that people. They had begged to have a test of loyalty and obedience to the government given them—that test was made, and taken by a large and respectable number of Roman Catholics, yet nothing had yet been granted them in return for that test ; nay more, when a bill had been brought into the Irish Parliament to allow papists to take building leases in corporate towns, that most reasonable indulgence was ungenerously refused them.

Something, he said, might be suggested in excuse with relation to the late disturbances in the South West part of Ireland ; but he assured the House, that he never knew a Roman Catholic of property in that country, who did not express the greatest abhorrence of those violences ; and he was convinced, that it was want of employment, want of industry, and want of reward for labour, that caused them ; and he concluded with a declaration, that he did not think the little indulgence which was now proposed to be given the Roman Catholics of this kingdom, should be accompanied by any test, as he was sure that any member who read over the act of King William, [which he then held in his hand] would think that in repealing it he was not so much employed in conferring favours on the Catholics, as in rescuing the statutes from disgrace.

The question was then put, and unanimously agreed to.

May 15.

No debate. Adjourned to the 18th.

May

May 18.

No debate.

May 19.

The House in Committee on the Irish importation bill.

Mr. Bamber
Gascoigne.

Mr. *Bamber Gascoigne*, (when the enumerated articles came to be necessarily mentioned, in order to fill up the blanks) moved, that woollens, woollen cloths, whole or mixed cotton, and cotton goods, whole or mixed painted and printed linens, gun-powder, and several other articles of inferior consequence, be exempted. agreed to.

He next moved, that whatever goods or merchandize, &c. which should be permitted to be exported under this act, should have duties laid upon any of them, or the ingredients which composed them, equal to those already subsisting in Great Britain, and likewise of any of the said export duties.

This clause being agreed to, Sir William Bagot proposed a clause, that no iron, manufactured, should be permitted to be exported under this act, till a duty of 2l. 10s. per ton be laid upon all foreign iron imported into Ireland.

These several clauses being agreed to, Sir Thomas Egerton moved, that the liberty given by this act to export checks from Ireland, do not take place till the parliament of Ireland shall take off the duty of one halfpenny per pound on all linen yarn exported from that kingdom.

The question being put, the committee divided, Ayes 33, Noes 79.

May 20.

No debate.

May 21

Lord North.

Lord *North* presented to the house of Commons the following message from his Majesty :

GEORGE R.

“His Majesty having considered the address of this House, that he will be graciously pleased to confer some signal and lasting mark of his royal favour on the family of the late William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, and being desirous to comply as speedily as possible with the request of his faithful Commons, has given directions for granting to the present Earl of Chatham, and to the heirs of the body of the late William Pitt, to whom the Earldom of Chatham may descend, an annuity of four thousand pounds *per annum*, payable out of the Civil List revenue ; but his Majesty not having it in his power to extend the effect of the said grant beyond the term

term of his own life, recommends it to the House to consider of a proper method of extending, securing, and annexing the same to the Earldom of Chatham, in such manner as shall be thought most effectual for the benefit of the family of the said William Pitt, Earl of Chatham."

GEORGE R.

It was moved that the said message be referred to the committee of supply; and unanimously agreed to. A bill was ordered in, which also passed unanimously.

The following petition was presented.

The humble Petition of the City of London, in Common-Council assembled,

SHEWETH,

"That your petitioners humbly beg leave to return their grateful thanks to this honourable House for the noble and generous testimony which it has borne to the services and merits of the late William Pitt, Earl of Chatham.

"And your petitioners with all humility, desire that their zeal may not seem unpleasing to this honourable House, or be interpreted as a wish in your petitioners to vary from the general sense of their country, as expressed in the late votes of this honourable House, by their requesting that the remains of the Earl of Chatham be deposited in the cathedral church of St. Paul, in the city of London.

"Your petitioners farther represent to this honourable House, that they entirely feel the delicacy of their situation, in consequence of the several measures taken by this honourable House, but hope that a favourable interpretation will be put upon any particular marks of gratitude and veneration which the first commercial city in the empire is earnest to express towards the Statesman, whose vigour and counsels had so much contributed to the protection and extension of its commerce.

By order of the Court,

R I X."

May 22.

No debate.

Adjourned to the 25th.

May 25.

Order of the day, for taking into consideration the papers respecting the Toulon squadron.

Extract and Substance of several Papers and Letters received by his Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State for foreign Affairs, in Relation to the Equipment of the French Fleet lately sailed from Toulon, according to the Dates of their being received, which are specified in the Margin.

Received
January 3,
1778.

It is said, that they have redoubled their work in the arsenal at Toulon; and that there is an intention of arming seventeen large ships, and seven frigates, which are in the port, exclusive of six ships and four frigates in the road.

Received
Jan. 10.

The six ships and four frigates still continue in Toulon road. The works of the arsenal and port are going on briskly. The two frigates on the stocks will be launched in the course of the month of January.

Received
Jan. 19.

The work at Toulon, which the advanced and inclement season of the year has hitherto interrupted, seems now to be again begun with activity. They are very busy in careening the remaining ships in that harbour; the *Burgoigne* has undergone a thorough repair; they are calling carpenters from all quarters; but their present employment consists in the hastening on the finishing of the frigate they are building, upon which they work without any intermission. On the other hand, a great part of the sailors belonging to the six men of war which compose their first division, have obtained a *congé* for the Christmas holidays; but the four frigates in the road, two of which are under sailing orders, have their full complement of men.

Received
Jan. 25.

Two frigates of twenty-six guns, called the *Magicienne* and *Precieuse*, will soon be launched at Toulon.

Received
ditto.

I am informed, that orders are sent to Toulon, for all the ships of the line to put to sea as soon as possible.

Received
Jan. 28.

My information is, that there will be a new armament of at least four ships of the line at Toulon.

Received
ditto.

The two new frigates, upon which they have been more particularly employed at Toulon, are now almost finished, and will be launched in a few days.

Received
Jan. 31.

Things remain in the same state at Toulon, where they continue to work briskly.

Received
Feb. 2.

I am informed, that a great quantity of corn has been bought up at Marseilles, for the use of the arsenal at Toulon; and that numbers of workmen were daily arriving at that place, in order to build new ships; as it is generally imagined, that most of those in that harbour, are actually unfit for service.

Every

Every thing is in motion at Toulon. It is reported, that orders have been given to fit out eight more ships of the line, and all the frigates immediately; and that four thousand sailors are expected from the western coasts. Besides the corn lately purchased, they have bought up a large quantity of salt fish at Marseilles. They are beginning to levy sailors in the ports along the Mediterranean; some are sent from Antibes. It is certain, they hardly cease working night or day, and that the ovens are in constant employment.

I am assured, that twelve ships of the line are to be armed at Toulon.

Orders are said to have been received at Toulon, to fit out, with expedition, four ships, four frigates, and four chebecks, to join the squadron of six ships and four frigates in the road. It is talked, that Monsieur de Cousage will command the whole. It is thought this new equipment will slacken the building of the three ships and two frigates.

They are careening the twelve ships, which are to be fitted out immediately; and orders are received at Toulon, to carry on the equipment with vigour. Four thousand seamen are expected there in a week. As there is a want of marines, three battalions of infantry are to be taken on board.

The two new frigates are launched at Toulon. The men of war in that harbour are not in so bad a state as may have been represented; they are certainly in a condition to go to sea.

The equipment of four ships of the line, four frigates, and four chebecks, at Toulon, goes on very briskly. The commanders are as yet unknown. The crews of the squadron in the road are completing.

The levy of sailors is carrying on with great activity all along the Mediterranean coast; and they are draughting off those at Marseilles, to send them to Toulon.

Express orders are received at Toulon, to arm immediately six ships of the line, five frigates, and four chebecks. The Lion and Hardi, part of the squadron in the road, are to be disarmed and careened. The squadron continues in the same state. The crews are completed.

The armaments continue at Toulon, without alteration. The commander in chief is still unknown. Nothing is now wanting at that port; and twelve battalions are expected there in a few days.

Received
March 3.

Of the ships which were in Toulon road, the Hector, the Provence, and the Fantafque, are returned into port, and disarmed for careening; and they are to be re-armed immediately after. When they are returned into the road, the three others, the Cæsar, the Lion, and the Hardi, will enter for the like purposes.

Received
March 5.

The levy of sailors continues with great activity on the coast of Languedoc, and they are immediately sent to Toulon. Smiths, carpenters, painters, and all other workmen, who can be usefully employed, are retained for the service of the fleet. They are busy in fitting out four men of war, which, with four frigates, and as many chebecks, are to be added to the six now in the road. In short, every thing seems to be in motion, and every step to hasten on the equipment of the fleet.

Received
March 9.

I am informed, that orders have been issued to get ready the whole naval force, and fit out all the ships whatever at Toulon. They work upon them without ceasing, and with such activity, that they have taken the men employed about the ships upon the stocks, to assist in the equipment. Three men of war, composing the first division, are returned into the harbour, to undergo some repair. The Cato, a new ship, of sixty-four guns, is masted; four frigates, and four chebecks, in the harbour, are quite ready; as well as about nine or ten chaloupes, mounted with one gun, carrying ball of thirty-six pounds weight. The bomb-vessels are not as yet begun upon. Daily additions making to their store of provisions, of which they have an abundance of all kinds. French Mediterranean coast entirely stripped of sailors; and all their trading vessels detained for want of men.

Received
March 13.

Orders are received at Toulon, to arm the Tonnant and Languedoc of eighty guns, and the Cato of sixty-four: the captains are not yet named. The ships in the road are to be careened, and to return into the road as soon as they are ready. The squadron will then consist of two ships of eighty guns, six of seventy-four, six of sixty-four, and one of fifty; six frigates, and four chebecks.

Received
March 16.

On the 15th the whole Toulon fleet, it is said, will be in the road, and ready to sail.

Received
March 17.

Count d'Estaing does not set out for Toulon till the middle of next week. He goes to take the command of at least ten ships of the line; what number of frigates I do not yet know; and is to have under him two *chefs d'escadre*, M. de Brougnon, and M. de Broves.

Count

Count d'Estaing sets out for Toulon the seventeenth or eighteenth of March. The fleet which he is to command is to consist of seventeen sail; ten, or perhaps twelve, ships of the line, the rest frigates. Received
March 19.

About eighty masters of small ships and vessels have been taken at Marseilles, and conveyed to Toulon, to serve in the fleet as coasting pilots. The same diligence is making use of, to complete the armament; and if they continue to work upon it as they have begun, there is little doubt, but that the whole maritime force in that department will be ready to put to sea in the course of next month, at farthest. Received
March 20.

Vice Admiral Count d'Estaing is setting out to take the command of the squadron at Toulon. He will have under him two commodores, Messieurs de Brugnon and de Broves. Received
March 26.

Orders are sent to Toulon, for an additional equipment of four large ships. The whole squadron, amounting to twenty-five sail, will be in the road in three or four days. M. d'Estaing is expected to arrive at Toulon the 25th. The squadron will be formed into two divisions; and it is believed that the Chevalier de Fabry will command the second division. Received
March 27.

Notwithstanding the great preparations making in the south of France, the French have not as yet made any levies of sailors out of their own provinces; the Mediterranean coast of Italy is able to furnish them with a considerable number, the greatest part of which are generally at their command. From the most accurate accounts, the late extraordinary levies in the ports of France, Languedoc, and Provence, amount to upwards of seven thousand men, those of last year not included. Desertion is very frequent amongst them; as the sailors in general, from the hardships with which they are treated, seem to have little inclination to continue in the service. Received
March 28.

I am informed, that the preparations at Toulon are continued with the same activity; and that the greatest part of the sailors of several merchant-ships, lately arrived at Marseilles from the French colonies, have been sent to the general rendezvous. Received
April 3.

I understand that the French are uncommonly active at Toulon. Some advices mention, that twelve men of war were in the road; but were thinly manned. The silence of those who are in a situation to be much better and sooner informed, makes me give no credit to them. However expeditious they may be in fitting out the additional ships, it is scarcely Received
April 9.

scarcely possible to have given them the necessary repairs in so short a time ; but, on the other hand, in case they are ready, there is certainly a number of sailors sufficient for their complement.

Received
April 10.

It is supposed, that Monsieur d'Estaing will sail from Toulon the twelfth or fifteenth of April, with ten ships of the line, and five frigates.

Received
April 13.

Count d'Estaing arrived at Toulon the 27th of March. He has added two ships to his squadron.

Received
April 19.

The Toulon squadron will certainly sail by the twelfth or fifteenth of April. One hundred picked men from the regular troops, are to embark on board each vessel.

Received
April 20.

They write from Marseilles, that a fleet will sail from Toulon about the middle of April ; and is to consist of ten ships of the line, eight frigates, four chebecks, and one bark. It is nevertheless confidently imagined, that, however expeditious they may be, they will not be able to have their ships ready before the latter end of April, or the beginning of May.

Received
April 21.

Since the arrival of Count d'Estaing at Toulon, they have worked with redoubled activity to compleat the equipment of his squadron. Besides the regular troops embarking, they are to embark on board the fleet some battering cannon, and furnaces for heating balls ; and, in short, all the materials for a siege. His mission is impenetrable ; he is to sail the tenth or twelfth of April, at latest. After the departure of this fleet, they go to work on the second squadron ; to consist of five ships of the line, three frigates, and four chebecks ; and it is still believed, that M. de Fabry is to command it.

Received
April 23.

The Count d'Estaing is incessantly employed at Toulon, in seeing and ordering every thing himself. Some passengers of distinction, who are concealed, are to embark with him.

Received
April 25.

—That an embargo was laid at Marseilles on all ships whatever ; that all sailors from thence were sent to Toulon.

Received
ditto.

—That there were in the road of Toulon six frigates and nine ships of the line ; and they were to be joined by three others. Count d'Estaing was arrived at Toulon, and was to hoist his flag on board the Languedoc.

Received
April 27.

—The whole squadron of Count d'Estaing is in Toulon road ; and proposed to sail the eleventh. It has on board five hundred of the regiment of Hainault, and five hundred of the regiment de Foix ; which, added to the marines, may form an army of six thousand foot, for a descent. Also artillery

tillery for a siege; mortars, bombs, iron grates and pincers for heating balls, chests of arms, money, &c. The men have been paid three months in advance. Four passengers of distinction are to go on board, who are concealed, and not to be seen by any one. The squadron consists of twelve ships of the line, and six frigates; and the departure is much pressed.

Mr. d'Estaing's squadron sailed the thirteenth of April, at four in the afternoon, with a fair wind, accompanied by fourteen large merchant ships. Received April 27.

—That Mr. d'Estaing's squadron was seen the fourteenth of April near Toulon, steering to the southwards. It was thought to be composed of twelve ships of the line, four frigates, and four chebecks. It is reported there were about two thousand, or two thousand four hundred troops on board, including marines. Received April 29.

Sir *William Meredith* observed, that, amidst all the dangers that threatened the very being of this country, in the very wreck of our commerce, and amidst the shocks of public credit, the ministers themselves seemed careless, thoughtless, and regardless of what is past, present, and to come. It does not, however, appear that they have been wanting in information; they had early and compleat intelligence of the preparations at Toulon. On the 3d of January last they had notice of the equipment; on the 8th of February they had advice of the number of ships that was to compose the squadron, and on the 28th of the same month, that the crews were all compleated. They had early information of Monsieur d'Estaing's arrival, and of the day on which he intended to sail; that he had 6000 troops on board; and that he actually did sail upon the 13th. We are now pretty far advanced in the month of May, yet our fleet is still at Spithead; not a ship is sent out, nor one step taken to guard us against this formidable armament, wherever the attack may be destined. Yet it was on the 20th of November when the Earl of Sandwich informed the public there were forty-two ships of the line fit for service, of which he said thirty-five might put to sea at an hour's warning, and the remaining seven would be ready in a fortnight. One needs not be a statesman to know, that on an apprehension of a foreign war, the first thing to be done is to send a fleet to the Mediterranean. To what other purposes were Gibraltar and Minorca conquered? And why have they been maintained

tained at the expence of many millions? Sir William said, he earnestly wished the King's ministers might clear themselves from every possible imputation. It is not only necessary in this country that public opinion should go along with government; but that they should maintain their credit in the several courts of Europe. But if it be true, as the First Lord of the Admiralty asserted, that we had so great a fleet ready in November, and which might by this time have had twenty more ships of the line added to them, it is unaccountable that they should be at this hour lying idle and useless at Spithead.

If a negative was to be put on the motion going to be made, he sincerely wished it might be on the fullest proof and conviction that the ministers have done their duty. Without such proof and conviction, the numbers which may compose a majority cannot, in the eyes of the world, clear them of neglect and criminality. Sir William then moved the following resolutions.

“ 1st, That it appears to this House, that his Majesty's ministers did receive intelligence, at different times, in the months of January, February, March, and April last, of the equipment of the fleet at Toulon, which sailed under the command of the Count d'Estaing, on the 13th of April last.

“ 2d, That it does not appear to this House, that any orders were sent until the 29th day of April, for any fleet of observation, to attend the motions of the said Toulon fleet; and that no fleet did actually sail, until the 20th of the present month of May, when eleven sail of the line left St. Helen's.

“ 3d, That whereas the navy of Great Britain was in the month of November last, represented by the King's ministers and servants to consist of forty-two ships of the line in Europe, of which thirty-five were supposed to be ready for immediate service, and seven others were in such forwardness, that they might put to sea in a fortnight: his Majesty's ministers were inattentive to the public welfare and safety, in not having stationed a fleet in the Mediterranean, as has been the practice in former times, and on similar occasions; by which neglect, the advantages to be derived from the expensive fortresses at Gibraltar and Port Mahon have been lost; and the Toulon fleet has been left at liberty, for six weeks past, to proceed towards the attack of any of his Majesty's defenceless dominions abroad, and to form a junction with the fleets in any ports out of the Mediterranean, and

and thereby collect a force from which Great Britain and Ireland may be exposed to imminent danger."

Sir *George Yonge* seconded the motion.

Sir *G. Yonge*.

Mr. *Adam* said, the consideration of the papers upon the table were so materially connected with the situation of this country, and that situation was so critical as to merit more attention than the House seemed inclined to bestow upon it. He then entered into a very distinct discussion of the characters of the present French ministers, to shew, that if we had been decided in our plan, or had acted with vigour, we should have forced that court to have renounced its American treaty, and to have sued for a continuation of peace. But that unfortunately for this country, our ministers seemed to be as ignorant of the characters of those they had to deal with, as they were of events; for it was well known, that the pacific disposition of the French King, the cautious temper of Mons. de Maurepas, and the difficulty Mr. Neckar found in procuring money, seconded by the vigorous decision of this country, would have overbalanced the interested and ambitious views of the person at the head of their naval department. He mentioned three things that might have been done, any one of which would have raised the glory of this country, and humbled the court of France. First, by a spirited message, accompanied with a powerful fleet, in December last, to have ordered the French court to dismiss Franklin and Deane, which he had the best reason to believe, from his information, would have been acquiesced in: or to have declared war, or acted as if war had been declared, upon the recall of our ambassador: or to have sent a fleet to the Mediterranean, to oppose the Toulon squadron. The efficacy of this last measure he was so much convinced of, that he heartily agreed to the third motion of the honourable gentleman [Sir William Meredith]. He proceeded to say, that the fault must either be owing to want of a decisive and vigorous plan, or to want of readiness in our navy: that the first might be the case, our present unnecessary and desperate situation with respect to American affairs, gave us but too much reason to suppose: if it was owing to the second, even then part of the blame belonged to the first minister, who ought to controul and influence all subordinate departments. He insinuated, that when timid and conciliatory measures were to be entered into, that then the noble Lord did exert these powers in their full extent; but when vigour, activity and exertion were

Mr. *Adam*.

necessary to animate and push forward the slow and tedious operations of the various departments of government, he then disowned that he had any controuling power, or that he would ever think of encroaching upon the province of others. He here recommended Lord Chatham to his example; and exhorted him, if he had any ambition, by an effort of exertion and activity, to retrieve his character, that he might receive hereafter the same honourable testimonies of approbation from a grateful people, that they were now paying with so much alacrity to the memory of that great and illustrious statesman. He then warned the noble Lord, that he would not now meet with the same excuse and forgiveness from this country, as he had met with in the American affairs; that the whole nation were unanimous upon this subject; that the spirit of the nation was up, and it was the business of the minister to pursue measures that should resent the injuries of France, and intimidate the other branch of the house of Bourbon from fulfilling the family compact.

Mr. Ellis. Mr. *Ellis* objected to the propriety of the motion, and said, however true the facts were, the enquiry was highly improper. He did not think the House of Commons an assembly calculated for the discussion of state affairs; it was the business of Parliament to raise supplies, not debate on the measures of government. The one was the proper object of legislative, the other of executive power. The senate of Rome, indeed, discussed all political questions; but that body was composed of men of honour and discretion, who could keep their own secrets. A point of great moment was once agitated, when six hundred senators were present; but not a word transpired of their deliberations, till the execution of their counsels had actually taken place; whereas the debates of both Houses of Parliament in England were sure to be published in every news-paper. Mr. *Ellis* then moved the previous question.

Mr. Townshend. Mr. *Townshend* followed Mr. *Ellis*, and ridiculed his notion of the secrecy of this House being greater in former times than now. He condemned his motion, and the doctrine upon which it was founded, as calculated to crush all enquiry at all times, and as depriving the House of one of its first privileges.

Mr. Byng. Mr. *Byng* said, he had formerly blamed the ministers for having no information; he had now to blame them for taking the good information they had had.

Mr.

Mr. Fox said, he could not avoid giving his opinion upon the present question, ill defended, or rather totally neglected as it had been by the ministers; that he should think himself happy if any of the noble Lords, or any of the honourable gentlemen upon the treasury bench would interrupt him at that moment; that finding they were not likely to afford him that satisfaction, and feeling himself in a situation, in which, according to his comprehension of the question, no member of Parliament had ever stood before. Feeling that he, as a member of this House, had, with many other persons in it, been insulted by what the right honourable gentleman had said. For what had his right honourable friend said? After papers had been delivered to this House, and these papers taken into consideration, he had moved the previous question: and upon what grounds had he moved that question? Because this House ought not to determine that the facts arising out of those papers were fit to determine upon; that the conclusion drawn from these facts was not a fit conclusion for this House to draw. His right honourable friend had mentioned a great assembly who could deliberate with secrecy, and he seemed to wish that this House could be as secret as the senate of Rome. He would recommend to that gentleman's attention, what one of the greatest ornaments of that senate said, who was indeed too apt to praise himself at the expence of that assembly: writing one day to a friend of his, he says, "*De causa non verecundi graviter dixi.*" He then proceeded to answer all the arguments that had been offered for the previous question: that so far from being an improper time to enquire, he thought it was the favourable moment that these resolutions should be entered into, and enquiry made; that all the arguments of the right honourable gentleman were calculated for refusing the information that had been already given; they should have been made when the papers were moved for, not when they were to be taken into consideration; that the privilege of this House was certainly to enquire into, and to censure the conduct of those who were entrusted with the executive power. The right honourable member had said, that the matter before us was a fit subject of deliberation for his Majesty's council, not for the House of Commons. He surely could not mean that the cabinet council was the fit place to censure want of wisdom in his Majesty's councils. Nor could it be supposed that the same council that had wanted wisdom in so many instances, was likely to be correct

future. He observed that the right honourable gentleman's argument was so broad, that it was calculated to screen every minister that had ever existed; and, if founded in reason, ought to put an end to all enquiry upon the conduct of those who directed affairs. But broad as that argument was, it was not calculated to screen the present ministers.

He said, an honourable friend of his [Mr. Adam] had early in the debate mentioned the minister's ignorance of the character of the French court. He indeed believed they were completely ignorant of that court, for they had taken no step that common sense would have dictated.

He said, the right honourable gentleman [Mr. Ellis] had expressed a very indecent opinion in very decent words; for nothing would be so injurious to the honour of Parliament, nothing so great an imputation on their credit and understandings, nothing so abhorrent from the ends and principles of their institution, as to suppose Parliament incapable of deliberating, judging, and debating on those affairs of state, which they were immediately summoned to vote and determine upon. To speak with freedom, and with the fullest extent that reason dictated, and information gave, was the essence of parliamentary functions; but it became them more particularly at a time when there was either such egregious folly, or such heinous treachery, in the King's ministers, that, though that House had given such enormous supplies, for the defence of Great Britain and the honour of the crown, yet had no one measure been taken to guard against the greatest danger that ever threatened this country. Whilst France was sending out vast fleets to attack all our remaining possessions; whilst she was arming great bodies of troops, and marching up to the sea coasts, probably with an intent to invade England or Ireland, the government was supine, torpid, senseless, and inactive. It was the care, the vigilance, the vigour of Parliament only, that could now redeem this country.

Lord North. Lord North said, he should be happy to have his conduct inquired into when the proper time was come, but he did not conceive the present time to be fit for that purpose. That he could not answer for the ability of his advice; nor that he would prove successful; but he was sure that what he did advise, he advised honestly. He seemed to think the channel service necessary to be taken care of, tho' he dreaded an invasion as little as any body; nor did he think any such thing very likely to happen. He did not know but a house
or

or a village might be burnt, but he was sure conquest could never be the consequence of such a descent. That freemen would always be able to repel every such attempt. That with respect to the dependencies of this country, they were so scattered, that it was impossible to defend them all from attack, but he trusted something might be done to protect them. That he had every reason to believe the French fleet was very ill manned, and ill provided of every thing, and that they were gone back to Toulon.

He then entered into a comparative view of the French and Spanish fleets with that of England, and seemed to think it was not at all wonderful, if the other two nations had a larger united fleet than this country ; for if a country did apply a great part of its revenue to building of ships, no doubt it could build ships ; but he was inclined to think the British seamen were much superior, and that we should beat them, tho' we had fewer ships of the line.

His Lordship then entered into the discussion of continental connections. First of all, he vindicated himself from having any share in giving them up. As for their utility, it was very difficult, from what he said, to understand whether he thought them useful or not. First of all, he said, they cost Great-Britain a vast deal, and the return they made was not adequate to the expence. Great-Britain was strong enough without them : they did not add to her strength. He then seemed to think that the battles won by our allies were battles won to Great-Britain, and that she therefore might be advantaged by them. And after discussing the matter for some time, the House was left in a state of obscurity whether he was for or against those connections. He said, the declarations of Spain were perfectly peaceable, and thought it could not surely be good policy to act in a hostile manner against a country that had not done any thing to offend us ; that such a conduct was the sure and only way to establish the family compact. He then said, an honourable gentleman [Mr. Adam] had accused him early in the debate for not taking upon him the controuling power of first minister, and guiding all the inferior departments ; and had insinuated, that on some occasions he was not averse to assume that power. In answer to that charge, his Lordship had to say, that he knew no such person as prime minister ; that he was first Lord of the Treasury, and would be answerable for every thing that came within his office, but further he did not go ; that he trusted he never would be so presumptuous

sumptuous as to think himself capable of directing the departments of others ; that whatever name he might receive, he did not think this constitution authorised such a character, and that he stood responsible as one of his Majesty's cabinet council, but not as that animal called a first minister. He said, when Minorca was lost, there was no enquiry nor censure past, till the business was all over. His Lordship seconded the previous question.

Mr. Grenville.

Mr. *Grenville* replied to Lord North. He said, that, although he had retired into the country, and wished to have enjoyed the comforts and tranquility of domestic happiness, without interruption ; yet the importance of the question, and the alarming state of our affairs, had impelled him to return to his duty in Parliament, and to give his vote on the present question. He desired the House to remember, that he had given notice of the French treaty with America. He desired it to be remembered, that the minister denied what proved to be true. He called to the memory of the public, how notorious the preparations at Toulon were ; that it now appears, the ministers knew every step that our enemies were taking ; and asked, how they could answer to their King, their country, and their God, for all the mischiefs which their delay and inattention might probably bring on this devoted nation ?

The House divided ; for the previous question, 117 ; against it, 91.

Sir William Meredith.

Sir *William Meredith* then moved his second resolution ; but Lord North, after a short speech, moved an adjournment.

After the second motion was read, and Lord North had moved the adjournment, a member desired to know, why the mode of proceeding was altered from the previous question to a motion of an adjournment ? To which Lord North gave no answer ; but Sir William Meredith replied that there was a very obvious motive for preferring the motion of adjournment ; because the House would then break up without having the third motion stated, which contained a charge of neglect and inattention and which the minister himself now *admitted* to be true : for it amounts to the admission of a fact, when the person charged not only avoids an inquiry but flies even from discussion. Perhaps indeed it might not have been agreeable to the noble Lord to have seen a motion of personal censure supported by so great and so very respectable a minority, as had just now voted against the previous question ; and the more so as people without doors will be apt to compare the respective situations of the majority with that minority ;
that

that the one is composed of independent men, the others almost to a man enjoy the emoluments of government. But there was one thing, Sir William said, he could not help taking notice of, which was that his Lordship had attempted to justify *his* conduct by the example of the ministry in 1756. Whereas nothing could be more dissimilar, neither could any thing be more unfair or more indecent in any man than to rake the ashes of the dead for a covering to his own shame. In 1756 the French, with a force fitted out at Toulon, attacked and took Minorca. The ministry at that time were very highly and perhaps deservedly blamed for not having a fleet in the Mediterranean, which the policy of this country requires to be always ready there on the most distant apprehensions of a war. But did the ministers then lie sleeping on their posts as the present ministry are now doing? No, it was on the 27th of March when they received intelligence of the preparations at Toulon; and such was the diligence and dispatch of Lord Anson, the first lord of the admiralty, that a fleet was got ready in a fortnight: it actually sailed on the 12th of April under Admiral Byng; and had that fleet been successful, there would have been no failure in point of time or preparation. But it is a mistake to assert, that parliament did not go as early as possible into the discussion of that business. 'Twas indeed too late to enter into a formal enquiry *that* session; but the ministers were immediately and incessantly arraigned both within and without doors for not being armed sooner. The very first day of the next session, the inquiry was moved; but the ministers then did not shrink from it as these do now; on the contrary, when the motion was made on this side the House, a noble Marquis [Lord Granby] whose memory will ever be dear to his friends and to his country, instantly arose, as a friend to the administration, to second it; and so far from shirking with previous questions, or a still more disgraceful motion of adjournment, the strife was, who should promote the enquiry most. Let me then ask wherein does the conduct of *that* administration resemble *this*? I mentioned already that the intelligence came on the twenty-seventh of March, and though unprepared at that time, the fleet sailed on the twelfth of April. On the third of January last intelligence came of the preparations at Toulon. On the twentieth of November preceding that, the Earl of Sandwich informed the public that the fleet lay ready for sailing. 'Tis now the middle of May, and not a ship has sailed from Spithead. On what enterprize Mons. D'Estaing is gone, neither the ministers

sters nor we know, but we may be assured that he is not gone upon an idle errand; whether he is ordered to the Delaware to attack the remains of our inefficient army there; or to take Halifax; or to attack Jamaica or some other of our West-India islands, time will shew: but sure it is, that whatever increase of ruin it may bring on the commercial interest of this country, whatever disgraces and whatever losses may happen from the operation of the Toulon squadron, are all to be attributed to those ministers who might have prevented our misfortunes, if they had made a proper use of those ample supplies which we have granted, but which have lain to every national purpose useless in their hands. From their tempers and from their habits much may be attributed to inattention and to carelessness. 'Tis indeed ignominious, it is hateful for men in public stations even to *seem* regardless of public safety in the hour of distress and danger; but in the present situation of affairs, there is something more than can be set down to the account of folly only; and if the king's ministers shrink as they do now from all investigation of their conduct, unjustifiable as *neglect* is, they will incur a suspicion of something still more criminal.

May 26.

Mr. Vyner.

Mr. Vyner moved, that this House will now resolve itself into a committee of the whole House, to consider of the state and condition of the army which surrendered themselves prisoners, on convention, at Saratoga in America; and also by what means Lieutenant General Burgoyne, who commanded that army, and was included in that convention, was released, and is now returned to England.

Mr. Wilkes.

Mr. Wilkes. I rise to second the motion of the honourable gentleman, but I confess that I am not a little embarrassed as to the mode of our proceedings on this singular business. I entirely approve the motion as far as it goes, and will give it a firm support. At the same time I declare that I think it too narrow, and that it ought to be amended by some general words, which would comprehend all the transactions of the northern army in America during the last campaign, prior to the affair of Saratoga. I believe that I am not at liberty both to second the motion, and to propose an amendment. I submit to you, Sir, the point of order. I rejoice that the honourable member is now among us, for I hope to obtain from him that information, which ministers have denied to this House. I think that information ought to include every transaction of moment from the General's leaving Europe to his

his embarking from America. Truth will, I am persuaded, at length reach the public ear. I do not, however, Sir, in this fair and full historical detail mean to include a relation of the military operations of the last campaign. The House may not be competent to a decision on those subjects. But, Sir, I would go much farther than the honourable gentleman who made you the motion. I would closely pursue the steps of those who with unhallowed feet invaded America. A nice sense of national honour calls upon us to enquire into the causes of the loss of an entire British army by a disgraceful capitulation, into the particulars of the treaty with the savages, their conduct during the campaign, the imputed cruelties, and particularly the setting fire to villages and houses of the country people, without any apparent necessity from military motives. These important considerations, with many others, are not comprehended in the motion of the honourable gentleman.

Sir, I desire it may be understood that I do not rise to bring a charge against the commander in chief; but, as a public man, to ask that information which can best be had from an intelligent officer of high rank, just returned from the great scene of action. I am sure he will most willingly give it to the House. Every gazette of Europe and America has published the disgrace of our arms at Saratoga, the ignominious terms of the convention, the charges of frequent murders and massacres of the defenceless inhabitants, and the wanton devastation and burning of the country by the British troops. I am entitled to the General's thanks for assisting in giving him this long-wished opportunity of clearing up many particulars confessedly perplexed and intricate, of justifying himself and others, under the charges which have been exhibited, at the bar of the public, by half the printed papers of almost the last twelvemonth. His delicate feelings will always respect the opinion of his country, and he will listen with attention to the voice of the people, possessing an undoubted right to scrutinize his conduct, as well as that of every man in their service, and the military servants of the crown mentioned in the proclamation. I should rejoice that the unhappy impression made on the minds of men by that proclamation issued by the General last June, from the camp at Putnam Creek, was done away. It bears his name, and is, I believe, avowed. The candid part of the world will be anxious to have the same clear evidence of his wise conduct and humanity in North America, which he often

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gave there of an active spirit and great personal bravery. It would ill become me, Sir, on this momentous occasion, to take up more of your time. The impatience of the House is highly raised and justly excited by objects of infinite consequence, and cannot fail of being completely gratified.

Mr. Fox.

Hon. Mr. Fox proposed an amendment, by inserting, after "consider," the words, "of the transactions of the northern army under Lieutenant General Burgoyne, and of—" The motion for the amendment was seconded by T. Powys, Esq.

General
Burgoyne.

General Burgoyne. Not imagining there would be any motion by the honourable gentleman who spoke first [Mr. Vyner] but that merely a desire of information would be expressed upon certain subjects, I had myself prepared a motion for an address to the King, to have such papers laid before the House, as are now in possession of the secretary of state, and contain an account in detail, much too long for me to give in my place, of every circumstance expressed in the questions of the honourable gentleman. Those papers are of the utmost importance to the state, to Parliament, and to the public.

The turn the business has taken precludes me at present from my intended motion; but I rise to give my warmest support to the amendment proposed; and as reasons for the expediency of instituting a full enquiry, to which the amendment points, I shall endeavour, as far as I can do it without breach of order in debate, to give to both the gentlemen [Mr. Vyner and Mr. Wilkes] satisfaction upon the particular subjects of their enquiries.

I agree with the honourable gentleman who seconded the motion, that all the conduct respecting the Indian nations is a matter that ought to be thoroughly canvassed; and I look upon his calling upon me openly, and in my place, as some reparation for the very free, and not very generous comments he made upon my conduct in my absence.

Sir, I ever esteemed the Indian alliances, at best, a necessary evil. I ever believed their services to be over valued; sometimes insignificant, often barbarous, always capricious; and that the employment of them was only justifiable, when by being united to a regular army, they could be kept under controul, and made subservient to a general system.

Upon this principle I heartily concurred with that gallant and humane general, Sir Guy Carleton, in the year 1776, to decline the offers and solicitations of the Indians to be then employed

employed separately: the impossibility of compleating the preparations for passing the regular troops over the lakes, made it impossible to employ them conjunctively.

In that year, Sir, it was my lot, by delegation from Sir Guy Carleton, who was then at Quebec, to preside at one of the greatest councils with the Indians that had been held at Montreal. Many gentlemen here know, that the ceremony preceding the taking up the hatchet, is, to offer to the representative of the power they mean to serve the pipe of war. It was pressed upon me by the chiefs present; and it was in my power, by a single whif of tobacco, to have given flame and explosion to a dozen nations. I never felt greater satisfaction than in being able to fulfil the instructions I was charged with, for restraining the impetuous passions of these people: it was a secondary satisfaction, at my return to England in the winter, to justify the conduct of Sir Guy Carleton in this respect, though the justification was very unpopular, among those—I mean not to particularize ministers, or ministers of ministers—but among those men, who, in their zeal against the colonists, had adopted the reasoning, that “partial severity was general mercy,” provided by carrying terrors it conduced to finishing the war. How just soever this principle may be, my mind is not of a texture for carrying it into effect; and I returned to Canada the following spring, when I succeeded to the command, determined to be the soldier, not the executioner, of the state.

I found care had been already taken by General Carleton, upon the same principles of humanity which always direct his conduct, to officer the Indians with gentlemen selected from the British troops, upon a distinction of their temper and judgment, as well as upon that of their valour; and in much greater number than ever was destined to that service before. To these precautions I added that of a favourite priest, who had more controul over the passions of the Indians than all their chiefs put together; and I trust the expence put upon government to engage that gentleman’s assistance through the course of the campaign, will not be esteemed an improper article in my accounts.

Sir, with these assistances I was able to enforce obedience to the injunctions of my speech at the great council, upon assembling the army, which has been made public. Barbarity was prevented, so much so, that in one instance, two wounded provincial officers were brought off in the midst of fire upon the backs of Indians; and a captain and his whole

detachment, placed in ambuscade, were brought prisoners to my camp by Indians, without a man hurt, though it was evident they were placed for the special purpose of destroying me upon a reconnoitering party, and I was at that time very popular with the Indians.

I could produce many more instances to shew that every possible exertion of humanity was used; and that the case of Miss Mecree excepted, which was accident, not premeditated cruelty, the stories upon which the honourable gentleman founded his accusation of me, were merely those fabricated by committees, and propagated in news-papers, for temporary purposes. The proclamation, which the honourable gentleman, in my absence, treated with so harsh terms, I avow, was penned by myself. The design was to excite obedience, first by encouragement, and next by the dread, not the commission, of severity;—"to speak daggers, but use none." And so far were the Americans, in their hearts, from putting upon that proclamation the interpretation that gentleman has done, that it served to procure me respect and acknowledgment wherever I afterwards travelled through the country.

Sir, a gentleman has been in London great part of the winter, who I wish had been called to your bar.—It is for the sake of truth only I wish it; for he is certainly not my friend. His name is St. Luc le Corne, a distinguished partisan of the French in the last war, and now in the British service as a leader of the Indians.—He owes us indeed some service, having been formerly instrumental in scalping many hundred British soldiers upon the very ground where, though with a different sort of latitude, he was this year employed. He is by nature, education, and practice, artful, ambitious, and a courtier. To the grudge he owed me for controuling him in the use of the hatchet and scalping knife, it was natural to his character to recommend himself to ministerial favour, by any censure in his power to cast upon an unfashionable general. He was often closeted by a noble Lord in my eye, [Lord G. Germaine] and, with all these disadvantages, as he has not been examined here, I wish the noble Lord to inform the House what this man has presumed to say of my conduct with the Indians. I know, in private companies, his language has been, that the Indians might have done great services, but they were discharged. Sir, if to restrain them from murder was to discharge them, I take with pride the blame—They were discharged. That circumstance apart,
I should

I should say that the Indians, and Mr. St. Luc at the head of them, deserted.

[* Sir, in regard to the call made upon me by the same honourable gentleman, for explanation respecting the burning of the country during the progress of the army under my command, I am ignorant of any such circumstance; I do not recollect more than one accident by fire; I positively assert there was no fire by order or countenance of myself, or any other officer, except at Saratoga. That district is the property of Major General Scuyler of the American troops; there were large barracks built by him, which took fire the day after the army arrived upon the ground in their retreat; and I believe I need not state any other proof of that matter being merely accident, than that the barracks were then made use of as my hospital, and full of sick and wounded soldiers. General Scuyler had likewise a very good dwelling-house, exceeding large store-houses, great saw-mills, and other out-buildings, to the value altogether perhaps of ten thousand pounds: a few days before the negotiation with General Gates, the enemy had formed a plan to attack me; a large column of troops were approaching to pass the small river, preparatory to a general action, and were entirely covered from the fire of my artillery by those buildings. Sir, I avow that I gave the order to set them on fire; and in a very short time that whole property I have described was consumed. But, to shew that the person most deeply concerned in that calamity did not put the construction upon it which it has pleased the honourable gentleman to do, I must inform the House, that one of the first persons I saw, after the convention was signed, was General Scuyler. I expressed to him my regret at the event which had happened, and the reasons which had occasioned it. He desired me to think no more of it; said that the occasion justified it, according to the principles and rules of war, and he should have done the same upon the same occasion, or words to that effect. He did more—He sent an aid-de-camp to conduct me to Albany, in order, as he expressed, to procure me better quarters

* This part of the speech included between crotchets, was omitted at the time of the preceding and following parts, and delivered separately upon a second call of Mr. Wilkes; but is here inserted in its proper place, as better connecting the whole matter spoke to by General Burgoyne.

than a stranger might be able to find. This gentleman conducted me to a very elegant house, and, to my great surprise, presented me to Mrs. Scuyler and her family; and in this General's house I remained during my whole stay at Albany, with a table of more than twenty covers for me and my friends, and every other possible demonstration of hospitality: a situation, painful it is true in point of sensibility at the time, but which I now contemplate with some satisfaction, as carrying undeniable testimony how little I deserved the charges of the honourable gentleman; and I leave it to his feelings, whether, after this explanation, some farther apology is not due to me.]

In regard to the first and most material question asked me by the honourable gentleman who proposed the motion, viz. In what situation is the army at Cambridge? It is with some surprise I find that any part of this country is ignorant of the extraordinary circumstances that have attended it, as I conceive government must have received intelligence of them some time ago. In regard to the report made by myself, I acquit the King's ministers of any blame in not yet having made it public, because it was so voluminous that the papers could not be digested and copied, with the constant labour of three clerks, before last Saturday, when they were put into the hands of the noble Lord, secretary of state for the American department. But I trust that noble Lord will now lose no time to make public matters of such importance. Let them undergo the scrutiny of the committee, as proposed by the amended motion, and let the world judge, upon their report, whether the spirit of the troops and the honour of the nation have been sustained and vindicated during those transactions. In confidence that these papers cannot possibly be withheld, I refer the honourable gentleman to them for a full delineation and explanation of the state of things at Cambridge, and will rest my present information upon a few material facts. The troops have undergone hardships and trials of patience as severe, though of a different nature, as any they experienced in the conflicts of the campaign. They have acquitted themselves with equal resolution, temper, and honour. They are at present detained by a resolve of the Congress, expressing that there are causes of suspicion that the convention was designed to be broke on our part, and therefore they are justifiable, without breach of public faith, to suspend the embarkation of the troops till the convention is ratified by the court of Great Britain.

In common with various pretences which involved other names in high departments to justify this measure, the Congress grounded many suppositions, that I knew to be unjust, upon my conduct. I thought it a duty to the state, to the army, and to myself, to refute those suppositions, and still, if possible, to give immediate effect to the convention. It will rest upon the House to judge, when they see the papers, whether I made good that refutation. And that brings me to another question asked by the honourable gentleman, : “By what means, and upon what condition, I am in person here?” Sir, I charged my aid-de-camp, who carried my dispatch to the Congress in answer to their vote of suspension, which the president had officially sent me, with a second letter, to be delivered in case the suspension, after consideration had of my first letter, was continued. The purport of this letter was to ask passports for my personal return for the re-establishment of my health (which was then much affected) for the purpose of settling large and complicated accounts, and other reasons; and I offered to give a parole that should the suspension of embarkation be prolonged beyond the time apprehended, I would return to America upon demand of the Congress, and due notice given, re-deliver my person into their hands, and abide the fate of the rest of the army with whom I had served. Sir, I had many reasons, not necessary nor proper to be alleged to the Congress, founded upon a nearer interest than health or any private expediency, to make me desirous to return home: to lay before government important truths, not to be communicated by other means, and to supply, as far as in me lay, by an assiduous and honest exertion in this House, the misfortune that had disabled me from performing my duty in the field. I accompanied my letter to the Congress by one to General Washington, wherein, upon an opinion of his character, I asked him for his support to an application that could not interfere with the public duties of our respective situations. I shall beg leave to read his answer as part of my speech; and I do it, Sir, not only lest in these times of doubt and aspersions, I should incur censure for holding private correspondence with an enemy, but likewise because I think this letter, though from an enemy, does honour to the human heart. [Here the General read the following letter.]

Copy of a Letter from General Washington to Lieutenant-General Burgoyne.

Head-Quarters, Pensylvania, March 11th, 1778.

“ SIR,

“ I WAS, only two days since, honoured with your very obliging letter of the 11th of February.

“ Your indulgent opinion of my character, and the polite terms in which you are pleased to express it, are peculiarly flattering; and I take pleasure in the opportunity you have afforded me of assuring you, that, far from suffering the views of national opposition to be embittered and debased by personal animosity, I am ever ready to do justice to the merit of the gentleman and the soldier; and to esteem, where esteem is due, however the idea of a public enemy may interpose. You will not think it the language of unmeaning ceremony, if I add, that sentiments of personal respect, in the present instance, are reciprocal.

“ Viewing you in the light of an officer contending against what I conceive to be the rights of my country, the reverse of fortune you experienced in the field cannot be unacceptable to me; but, abstracted from considerations of national advantage, I can sincerely sympathize with your feelings, as a soldier, the unavoidable difficulties of whose situation forbid his success; and as a man, whose lot combines the calamity of ill health, the anxieties of captivity, and the painful sensibility for a reputation, exposed, where he most values it, to the assaults of malice and detraction.

“ As your aid-de-camp went directly on to Congress, the business of your letter to me had been decided before it came to hand. I am happy that their chearful acquiescence with your request, prevented the necessity of my intervention. And, wishing you a safe and agreeable passage, with a perfect restoration of your health,

I have the honour to be,

Very respectfully,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

GEO. WASHINGTON.”

Sir, the Congress readily consented to my application; and by this candid treatment of my enemies, I am here to vindicate my conduct against the false and barbarous interpretations

pretations that have arisen, and have been suffered to prevail, by those who could have contradicted them, at home.

The honourable gentleman wishes to know what is the difference of numbers of the army between the time of signing the convention and the present time; and I find the idea of great desertion very much prevails. That some have deserted, in the worst sense of the word, is true. They are few, the scum of the regiments, and no loss of real strength. The greater part who have absconded, have had no intention to abandon the service, and if an epithet of honour could at any time be applied to a fault, theirs might be called an *honourable desertion*.* Some of these men left letters or sent messages to their officers, informing them that in their present want of necessaries and comforts, and their inability to serve in arms, they had taken to trades and day labour in the country, but that they held themselves under an obligation, from which they would never depart, to return to their regiments whenever the time of embarkation was ascertained: others, upon a high, though mistaken, suggestion of spirit, made efforts to effectuate a passage through the woods, to join the armies under Sir William Howe or Sir Henry Clinton, and it is believed that some of them succeeded. The whole of the absentees may amount to between five and six hundred men.

Sir, I have thus far endeavoured to give the honourable gentlemen satisfaction in the matters that seem most immediately to engage their attention, and that I could consistently with order adduce in argument to support my vote for a more general enquiry.

* General Burgoyne took occasion in two subsequent debates to explain his meaning in this phrase, which he found had been misunderstood both within and without the House. He meant to apply the word *honourable* only to the common soldier's conception, who, unused to consider and discriminate punctiliously the obligations of conventions with an enemy, acted only upon the principles of zeal to serve his king, and again to be actively employed in arms: that therefore their conduct was honourably intended, tho' misconceived. That so far from justifying that conception himself, he was persuaded that to retain such deserters when demanded, or indeed discovered, would be an infringement of the convention, and he was persuaded Sir William Howe or Sir Henry Clinton would, upon such demand or discovery, return them.

I shall now proceed (as yet stronger reasons for agreeing with the amendment) to take notice of what has hitherto passed in the House, and upon very imperfect information, respecting other parts of the late campaign.

But, Sir, accustomed as I have been to be indulged by the House upon every occasion; and confident, as I ought to be, upon one where their indulgence is justice, I find cause in my own mind, in entering upon so complicated a subject, to implore anew the fullest scope to their patience and candour, for a man, whose faculties, far too weak for such shocks, are almost unhinged by a succession of difficulties abroad, that fall to the lot of few, and whose disappointments and anxieties have been consummated, by the unexpected reception he has met at home.

And this address, Sir, is the more necessary, because I stand here unconnected and unassisted. I am ignorant who would have supported my own motion, had I made it, though confident, from a prepossession of its propriety, it would have found assistance somewhere. Neither courting nor fearing power, neither courting nor fearing party, I stand here upon the sole basis of truth and honour, and only ask support in proportion to the justice of my cause.

During my absence an enquiry was instituted, in which my name was very much involved. In the short space of time since my return, and in the agitated state of mind I have mentioned, it has been impossible for me to obtain, from the mere conversation and recollection of friends, all that passed upon that occasion; but I have collected enough to know that I have been treated with great attention in general; and it is among my first duties to return to every quarter of the House my very sincere and grateful acknowledgments. I also know, that with all that attention and favour, much implied censure must have fallen upon me, from the nature of the proceedings, and more especially from the position, which I cannot admit to be a true one, but which I understand has been much insisted upon, "That where there is miscarriage there must be blame; and consequently, that the acquittal of one man infers the condemnation of another."

Sir, the papers which have been laid before the House are in some respects deficient, and in others superfluous. The first superfluity to which I allude, is a private letter from me to the noble Lord, acquainting him with my intention of going to Bath; of my audience with the King; of my solicitation to his Majesty for active employment the next campaign; expressing my

hopes of his Lordship's patronage in that pursuit, and concluding with such acknowledgments and professions as were natural to flow from a warm and unsuspicious heart, impressed with a sense of another's favour.

Not conceiving for what possible public purpose this letter was produced, I can only attend to the effects it has had to prejudice me personally. Suspicions have been excited, that at the time I wrote that letter I was courting command, and by adulatory means, in preference and in prejudice to Sir Guy Carleton, under whom I had had the honour to serve, a confidential second, in the preceding campaign. Every person in government might have pronounced my acquittal of so base a proceeding, because they knew, though the public did not, that it was decided * in the Autumn of 1776, and notified to Sir Guy Carleton accordingly, that his military command was confined to the boundaries of the province of Quebec. It did not occur to the noble Lord to state that fact, because doubtless he did not foresee the prejudices the letter would occasion; but I cannot but lament he did not produce other letters of mine, which would have removed effectually every possible suspicion of a design so foreign to my heart as that of supplanting a gallant friend. Such letters would at the same time have rendered unnecessary the long train of correspondence laid upon your table, to shew that the preparations in Canada were duly expedited; because I should have been found to express the fullest sense of the zeal, the assiduity, and the honour with which Sir Guy Carleton acted, notwithstanding his disappointment in not being employed to conduct the campaign.

Will it be said, that the letters I allude to were withheld because they were private?—In the first place, they do not properly come under that description, though it is true they were not office letters.—They could not be directed as such; because, acting in subordination to Sir Guy Carleton, the official correspondence could only with decorum pass through him; but they were not private as applied to secrecy, nor

* This decision was made, not only upon the expediency of the governor attending the civil duties of the province, which were thought at that time to require particular attention, but also upon doubts whether the General's commission authorised him to act beyond the boundaries: and this whole transaction passed long before the return of General Burgoyne to England, and entirely without his knowledge.

improper as they related to the distinct and separate object of the command I was entering upon. But, Sir, had any parts of these letters (or of any others necessary to my justification, of which I say there are many) been private in any sense of the word, will that excuse be alleged for detaining them, when there has appeared before you a paper of the most secret nature, I mean my thoughts upon conducting the war from the side of Canada. What officer will venture hereafter to give his opinion upon measures or men, when called upon by a minister, if his confidence, his reasonings, and his preferences are thus to be invidiously exposed, to create jealousies and differences among his fellow-officers, and at last to put an imposition upon the world, and make him responsible for the plan as well as the execution of a hazardous campaign? The plan, as originally drawn, I have no reason to be ashamed of, because it underwent the inspection, and had the sanction, of some of the first and ablest officers of this country: but the plan, as it stood when my orders were framed, can with no more propriety be called mine, than any others formed by the cabinet for the distant parts of America, or any other quarter of the globe, where I had no participation or concern.—The noble Lord well knows, that the idea expressed in the secret paper laid before you, of a latitude to act against New-England was erased; that a power to embark the troops in case of unforeseen impediments, and make the junction with the southern army by sea was not admitted.—Will it then be insinuated that the plan was mine?—Why was it not produced in that changed and garbled state, by which the minister made it his own? Because it would have been one proof, if one had been wanting to unprejudiced minds, that by cutting off every proposed latitude, and confining the plan to one only object, the *forcing* a passage to Albany, the orders framed upon that plan could be no otherwise understood, than as positive, peremptory, and indispensable. But, Sir, it has been boldly insinuated, and perhaps even credited by some in this House, that the words at the latter end of the orders, which are called the saving clause, were specially dictated by me.—Sir, to suppose that, is to suppose me an idiot!—Saving clause!—to whom? Surely, not to the general who was to act under it; for see the situation in which it puts him.—Under the words, “you are to act as exigencies may require,” let us suppose him to take the cautious part. He makes no attempt upon the enemy, because his *exigency* was such, that in doing so he must abandon his

his communications and risk his retreat. What would the government, the army, and the country have said to him? What ought every man to have said to him who read the prior part of this order?—"Is this vigorous exertion? Is this to *force* your way to Albany? The enemy were panic struck before British troops; their numbers therefore were but as shadows. The loyalists awaited your advance to join by thousands—Sir H. Clinton was ready to move upon the lower part of Hudson's river—Your interpretation of orders was nonsense; your inactivity was cowardice—You have ignominiously lost the campaign."

Take the consideration the other way—The general follows the principle, the spirit, and the letter of his order—fights his ground by inches, and miscarries. "You shall be disgraced for your rashness," says the minister.—"You had a reserve, and should have made use of it. *Exigencies* required you should have remained on the east side the Hudson's river." Sir, to imagine a general could dictate such a dilemma for himself is preposterous. To believe that ministers could mean it, is severe credulity against them; it would be to believe them capable of the equivocation of a fiend, to insure the ruin of those who acted under their direction, whatever part they should take. I charge them not so heavily. I am persuaded that saving clause was meant, when it was penned, as it has been understood by me, by Sir William Howe, and by every other person who has read it, as referring solely to exigencies after the arrival of my army at Albany.

But, Sir, this ideal blame, in not availing myself of the *saving clause*, has been supported by a story, that I should have hardly believed it within malevolence to invent, but which I find has been propagated with great industry, viz. that Generals Philips and Frazer remonstrated against the passage of the Hudson's river; and that finding their remonstrances of no avail, they took the parts of brave men in despair, and persevered in their duty against their reason. Upon the honour of a gentleman, without any saving or reservation whatsoever, I pronounce that report to be a direct and abominable falsehood. Sir, those officers were the eyes and the hands by which I conducted all material operations: more able advisers, or more faithful friends, never existed: that they saw I was placed in an arduous situation, and felt for my difficulties, it is true; but that they ever dropt a syllable that implied an idea that I had an alternative, I flatly deny.

deny. The indefatigable alacrity of General Philips to bring forward the transports, preparatory to the passage of the river, was uncommon even in support of a favourite object ; it would have been uncommon indeed, had he acted with secret reluctance ! As to General Frazer, our communications were those of the most unreserved friendship ; and it is my pride to affirm, that the consonancy of his sentiments with mine were almost invariable. Upon the passage of the Hudson's river, in particular, he thought it of uncontrovertible expediency ; he thought it glorious danger ; he was consulted upon all measures at the time, and subsequent to it ; he bore an active part in many ; he approved of all ; and the last sentence he uttered, was a message of affection and good wishes to me.

The other falsehoods that have been dispersed respecting the same period of time, can hardly be urged as reasons for enquiry, for they are below refutation ; such as the delays occasioned by carrying forward *all* the artillery, and a cumbersome train of baggage. " It was a mark of Eastern pomp," says a ministerial news-writer. That *all* the artillery was with the army is false, for the heavy train was sent back to Canada : the field-train which remained was that which had been destined for the expedition, when Sir Guy Carleton expected to have the conduct of it in person. That intelligent and judicious officer, General Philips, had been consulted upon the proportion ; and it had been regulated upon the consideration of the nature of the war ; the power of that arm in forcing posts, and against new troops ; and the probability of having posts ourselves to fortify. Neither, Sir, was the artillery, in the proportion carried, the cause of the least delay ; because the horses that drew it were supernumerary to those which were sufficient for all the carts and waggons we had ; and consequently, within the time indispensably given for the transport of the provision, the artillery was brought forward by horses that could have been no otherwise employed.

The supposed quantity of baggage is equally erroneous. I cannot suffer an idea so unjust to the spirit of the army to remain upon the minds of the public. All baggage of bulk, to the abridgment of many material comforts, had been cheerfully left behind by the officers ; some of them had not beds ; many lay in soldiers' tents ; and I know of none that had more than the common necessities for active service.

It must be total want of knowledge of the country and the war, to suppose that, with all these precautions, the train of carriages did not still remain great. It is to be considered, there was a train of six hundred carriages; and those too few for the indispensable purpose of transporting provision, where there was no water carriage; there was another train of very cumbersome carriages, equally necessary for the transport of the boats, where the rapids prevented their passage in the stream; a transport, in some places, of many miles in length. Sir, it would be trifling with the House to dwell longer upon these censures, the offspring of malice and ignorance; the prevalence of such reports tends to one use--- It will persuade the world, at least, that material faults could not abound, when detraction itself is reduced to have recourse to such accusation.

Sir, reverting therefore to the more gross injuries my reputation has sustained, I think I have stated enough to shew, that the character of a member has been unavoidably brought into question, and upon his assertion, that the information the House has proceeded upon is incomplete and fallacious, I know not what description of men could justly refuse to him personally a new and full enquiry.

I would ask of ministers themselves, what would be their feelings if, after an unsuccessful undertaking, of high trust and importance, and debarred, by an interdiction, from the presence of their sovereign, the means of submitting their conduct to that royal breast, where justice, and benevolence, and protection to the innocent, are ever to be expected, except when truth is perverted or concealed--what would be their feelings, if refused also an appeal to their country? To my brother officers in parliament I would more particularly apply for their support to this amendment, as a common cause of the profession: they will consider the discouragement that must ensue, and the injury the service must suffer, if an officer, who is conscious to have done his best, whose greatest enemies pretend not to impute to him any other charges than excess of zeal and erroneous judgment, and even these charges founded upon a mutilated state of facts---What is the state of officers, if upon such grounds, and by the artful management of other circumstances, they are disgraced at court, put by, if not inevitably precluded the judgment of a military tribunal, and at last denied the only possible means of justification that remains---a parliamentary investigation of a measure of state with which the rectitude or criminality of their conduct

duct is inseparably blended? To my honourable friends who made the original motion early in the winter, and all who took part in it, I may yet more strenuously address myself, to repair, by the passing this question and amendment, the injury that unintentionally they brought upon me by the then confined mode of proceeding. To all these considerations, Sir, I could join, were it expedient, many more persuasive calls upon the human heart, to take up this proceeding for the sake of an injured individual: but I wave an appeal to private sentiments, and desire the motion to be considered as a call upon the public duty of the House; and, divesting myself, as far as possible, of every personal motive; scorning the pitiful contention, for such comparatively it would be, whether the minister should exonerate himself from *this* error in his instruction, or the general from *that* in his execution; I here, in my place, as a representative of the nation, require and demand a full and impartial enquiry into the causes of the miscarriage of the northern army in an expedition from Canada.

It is a great national object. The crisis of the time emphatically requires it. The existence of the British empire depends upon the exertions of the military, and the best foundation for public spirit is public justice. In addition to the natural animation which as Britons the army possess, place before their eyes that secondary spring and controller of human actions, reward and punishment. Let the first and most glorious reward, the honest applause of the country, be obtained by a scrutiny into truth, for those who deserve it: on the contrary, if there has been delinquency, let the spirit of Manlius preside in the punishment.

“The hand of Fate is over us, and Heaven

“Exacts severity from all our thoughts.”

If there has been disobedience; if unauthorised by circumstances, if *uncompelled by orders* (for I will never shrink from that plea) a general has rashly advanced upon the enemy, and engaged against insurmountable odds; the discipline of the state should strike, though it were a favourite son.

“*I, Liclor, deliga ad palum.*”

These, Sir, are the means to excite true ambition in your leaders, these are the means to keep them in due restraint; this was the system of the glorious patriot [Lord Chatham] whose obsequies you now celebrate; and could his ashes awaken, they would burst their cearments to support it.

As

As for myself, if I am guilty, I fear I am deeply guilty : an army lost ! the sanguine expectation of the kingdom disappointed ! a foreign war caused, or the commencement of it accelerated ! an effusion of as brave blood as ever run in British veins shed, and the severest family distresses combined with public calamity.---If this mass of miseries be indeed the consequence of my misconduct, vain will be the extenuation I can plead of my personal sufferings, fatigue and hardship, laborious days and sleepless nights, ill health and trying situations ; poor and insufficient will be such atonement in the judgment of my country, or perhaps in the eyes of God---yet, with this dreadful alternative in view, I provoke a trial---Give me inquiry---I put the interests that hang most emphatically by the heart-strings of man---my fortune---my honour---my head---I had almost said my salvation, upon the test.

But, Sir, it is consolation to me to think that I shall be, even in surmise, the only culprit---Whatever fate may attend the general who led the army to Saratoga, their behaviour at that memorable spot must entitle them to the thanks of their country---Sir, it was a calamitous, it was an awful, but it was an honourable hour---During the suspense of the answer from the general of the enemy, to the refusal made by me of complying with the ignominious conditions he had proposed, the countenance of the troops beggars description ---a patient fortitude ; a sort of stern resignation, that no pencil or language can reach, sat on every brow. I am confident every breast was prepared to devote its last drop of blood, rather than suffer a precedent to stand upon the British annals of an ignoble surrender.

Sir, an important subject of enquiry, as I mentioned at my out-set, still remains---The transactions at Cambridge, and the cause of the detention of the troops. If I there have been guilty, let me there also be the only sufferer.

Sir, there is a famous story in ancient history, that bears some analogy to my circumstances ; and when allusions tend to excite men's minds to exertions of virtue or policy, I shall never think them pedantic or misplaced.* The event I mean happened in an age when Roman virtue was at its height.

* It had been mentioned in a former debate, that reference to ancient history carried sometimes an air of pedantry, and were seldom of use.

It was that wherein Manlius devoted his son, and the first Decius devoted himself. A Roman army, shut up by the Samnites at Caudium, were obliged to surrender their arms, and to submit to the more ignominious condition of passing under the yoke of the enemy. The consul who had commanded them, proposed in the senate, to break the treaty whereby the army was lost to the state, and to make him in person the expiation, by sending him bound to the enemy to suffer death at their hands. In one point of view the present case extremely differs from the example; because by the treaty at Saratoga the army was saved to the state. It is the non-compliance with public faith that alone can lose it---and here the parallel will hold; if I have been instrumental to the loss of those brave troops *since* the treaty, I am as culpable as if I had lost them *by* the treaty, and ought to be the sacrifice to redeem them. Sir, this reference may appear vain-glorious. It may be doubted whether there exists in these times public spirit seriously to emulate such examples. I perhaps should find myself unequal; but others, who are most ready to judge me so, must at least give credit to one motive for stating the parallel---that I am too conscious of innocence to apprehend there is the least risk of being exposed to the trial.

Sir, I have only to return my sincerest thanks to the House for the patience with which they have endured so long a trespass upon their time, and to join my hearty concurrence with the other gentlemen who have spoken in favour of the amendment.

Lord George
Germaine.

Lord George Germaine said, the honourable gentleman seemed desirous of an explanation to three circumstances, which he would readily give him. As to the confidential letter, it was accidentally put among the official letters, and by that means was sent by the clerks, among other papers, for which he was very sorry. With respect to Mons. St. Luc, that gentleman had introduced himself to him, as a man who had performed great services at the head of the savages; and that, in conversation with him, he had been told, that the General [Mr. Burgoyne] was a fine officer with the regulars, but that he did not seem to like the savages, nor did he take the proper steps to retain their good-will: that he was *un brave homme, mais lourd comme un Allemand*--a very brave man, but as heavy as a German!---As to his not having access to his sovereign, there were various precedents for the refusal, till his conduct had undergone a military enquiry. His Lordship concluded, that as military men were the most proper

per judges to decide in the present question, he did not see the propriety of Parliament interfering in it at all.

Mr. *Cornwall* was likewise of opinion, that Parliament were incompetent judges of the matter then before the House. *Mr. Cornwall.*

The *Attorney General* [Mr. Thurlow] said, they had obtained one enquiry into the matter, which had been sufficient for the House to form an opinion on the matter; for his part, he had formed one, though he should not declare it. *Attorney General.*

Mr. *Grenville* wished to revive the committee on the state of the nation, and that the Canada papers might be laid before them. *Mr. Grenville.*

Mr. *Fox* said, the papers might be referred to a new committee, which he would prefer, because he hoped the same resolutions would not be passed: he was for a thorough and complete investigation; he was apprehensive that upon certain questions being asked, the spirit of the honourable general would lead him to go into the detail for his own justification, and from his openness and candour, he wished to state the motion so as to take in properly the whole unreserved discussion of these melancholy events. If a committee revived the former subject, he should lay open the dark and shameful decisions, against positive facts, which passed that committee, under the banners of a noble Lord over the way, [Lord George Germain.] All the hopes he now had, were, the House had not yet sanctified the resolutions of that committee; there were now three times the number of members present that there were upon a former occasion, and he hoped, they would not go quite the length of the former committee. The surrender of the army was, as the worthy alderman had said, ignominious to this country, whoever might be the occasion of that ignominy, whether the general or the ministry. *Mr. Fox.*

Earl *Nugent* said, there was not the least blame any where in his opinion, but a series of unexpected events, which were the fortune of war; that every thing respecting the charge of inhumanity, or cruelty, or unsoldierlike treatment, was merely a vague report; that he had read every thing published on the occasion, and would assert, that not a single paper, or letter of authenticity, had appeared to justify any harsh expression against the commander in chief of the army which capitulated at Saratoga. *Earl Nugent.*

Mr. *Wilkes*. I am on this occasion merely the echo of the public voice. I have made no personal attack on the commander in chief, nor undertaken to support any charge against him. Measures, and not persons, I desired minutely

to investigate ; and the epithets which I employed, were to the facts and the events. I suppose it will be admitted, that the convention in 1777 at Saratoga was more disgraceful than the capitulation at Closter Seven in 1757, because the troops there kept their arms.

I have not proceeded, Sir, at any time on vague report. I referred to authentic letters published by order of the Congress, and to other state papers of unquestionable authority, which demand the most serious attention, and nicest scrutiny. The memory of the noble Lord who spoke last, must either be very confused, or his reading very confined.

The honourable gentleman [General Burgoyne] has given us a good deal of the ancient Roman history, but overlooked two or three important questions relating to very modern transactions, and our own history. I wish, Sir, an answer to the charge I have repeatedly read of the burning villages and houses, and the wanton destruction and devastation of property, during the progress of the northern army under his command.

One word, Sir, before I sit down, on what is stated by the honourable gentleman, as an event in the Roman history similar to the affair of Saratoga. A considerable Roman army was shut up by the Samnites at the *furcæ Caudinæ*, obliged to capitulate, and with their general to pass under the yoke. So far is retailed out to us, but the sequel of the transaction is not mentioned. I shall give it briefly to the House. Early in the following year, the dictator Cornelius Lentulus put himself at the head of the same Roman legions, and gave the Samnites a total overthrow. It was no article of the capitulation at Caudium, that the same troops should not serve again against the same enemy. The Samnite general, Pontius, was the very next year after the affair of the Caudine Forks, with the whole Samnite army, forced by the Romans to pass under the yoke, unarmed, with only one garment each, that the former ignominy might be retaliated by the same troops on the same enemy. The Roman spirit soon made a conquest of the whole country of the Samnites, and afterwards of all Italy and the world.

Lord George
Gordon.

Lord George Gordon. I hope this very melancholy account of the sufferings of the King's army under the command of that unfortunate general [General Burgoyne] will at length impress Parliament with a due sense of the rashness of their proceedings, and prove a timely example and warning to his Majesty, and to the people, that the most accomplished ge-
nerals,

nerals, at the head of the completest armies, when employed by arbitrary power to reduce mankind to unconditional submission, are defeated and frustrated in their wicked attempts by the heavenly interposition of the Divine Providence.

It has pleased God to support the zealous assertors of civil and religious liberty in their just rights; and by crowning their resistance with success, he has, through his infinite mercy, averted those evils from America, which the violent proceedings of this kingdom, both in church and state, have so manifestly threatened.

The experience of a few years has shewed to the whole world the justness of their apprehensions, and the historians of this war will be puzzled to decide, whether the governors of the church, or the governors of the state, have been most eager, bloody, and oppressive in their pursuit after American subjection.

The ambitious prelates in the House of Lords have dared to countenance his Majesty in preferring popery when he had it in his power to have established protestantism, and Parliament has confirmed it annually, by not complying with the pious petitions of the protestant inhabitants of Canada, who have devoutly, religiously, and constitutionally implored the repeal of that obnoxious act, the Quebec bill, as establishing the government of their country upon the narrow basis of French law, and militating in the highest degree against the glorious constitution of this kingdom.

Those same high prelates have countenanced his Majesty in employing the Savages—Heathens without grace or mercy to carry desolation and destruction amongst the presbyterians and independants in America. And that most horrible massacre of Miss Mac Ray's, will remain an indelible stain on the religion and humanity of Great Britain in after ages, when Queen Mary's massacre of the protestants in England, and the persecutions of the presbyterians in Scotland by King Charles and their predecessor Arch-bishop Laud, of infamous memory, shall be done away and forgotten.

I am very happy at the same time to be able to make two most goodly exceptions in the persons of the right reverend Bishops of Peterborough and St. Asaph, who have done honour to religion and their country, through the pious course of their own lives, and by their generosity and loving-kindness to their brethren in America.

If

If I have not already trespassed too long on the indulgence I very unworthily meet with, I beg to add, that from my attachment to his Majesty's person and family, and for the love I bear my fellow subjects, their lives and liberties, I hope there is no truth in what has been of late very much reported about town, I mean the promotion of certain characters. For I am of opinion, that if his Majesty can be so ill-advised, so far misled, and so deluded, as to continue any longer in his council, or to confer any honours, places, pensions, profit, or emolument, on those unhappy persons who have wickedly attempted to reduce the colonies to unconditional submission, his Majesty will as justly, as necessarily, and as certainly lose the confidence and support of the people of Great Britain, as he has clearly and evidently thirteen flourishing provinces, and three millions of the bravest, most religious, and virtuous subjects of the crown.

I shall vote for the enquiry, as amended by the honourable member on the floor [Mr. Fox] in compliance to the wishes of the unfortunate general who is so very seriously interested in the event.

The question was now put upon the amendment, when the numbers were 95 for the amendment and 144 against it.

Mr. T.
Luttrell.

Mr. T. *Luttrell* drew a comparison between the conduct of the officer and of his minister. In former times, he said, it had been the custom of Britons to give praise and thanks to such of their officers and servants as exerted their strenuous and zealous efforts for the public weal, even if those efforts were not crowned with success; but now-a-days they bestow praise only in proportion to the listlessness and inattention with which these servants performed their duty.

The noble Lord, says he, in the blue ribbon [Lord North] disclaims being dictator whenever the mismanagement of government comes under the consideration of Parliament. Whether Great Britain is prosperous or defeated, it is none of his plan, none of his act. In every thing essential to the greatness or happiness of the nation, we find the noble Lord timid; he is not first minister, he is only the instrument of the privy council; he has but one humble vote there, and cannot be accountable to the nation for the folly of the plans he undertakes to recommend to his Sovereign. And should the plan strike at the liberties of his country, at the very root of the constitution, he is then but the echo of Parliament. In what is the noble Lord daring and enterprising? He prides himself but in one act founded on his own resolution,

tion, judgment and integrity ; he asks credit in Parliament but for one ornament added to the crown, one benefit to the state ; that act of his own consists in having fixed on a crisis of impending ruin and calamity unknown in the annals of our history before, and which the firm spirit and exalted wisdom of a Chatham might have found difficult to cope with ; then did he seize the glorious opportunity to recommend to his Sovereign a war minister, whose public incapacitation for every vigorous exertion of mind, whose disgrace at the court of George the Second, was founded on the most decisive censure of a court martial, whose loss of the nation's confidence, and his own character, is a public record. What had the nation to expect from his councils ? What plan of his, since in his office, dare he expose to the public eye and say, it has succeeded ? Why then should we give him a partial acquittal to the prejudice of a gallant officer, whose only crime has been avowedly that he was too zealous, too brave, too enterprising, too anxious for the good of his country, had strictly obeyed his orders, and done all that British valour was capable of, to carry the minister's plan into execution. Had he, instead of that, receded from his colours, disobeyed the commands of his superiors, and hid himself from danger, he might have had pretensions to one noble Lord's patronage, [Lord North] and to the other's [Lord George Germain] dignities and emoluments. General Burgoyne asks a fair and open trial, the man who shrinks from it, and avails himself of an unjust, partial acquittal, must be guilty.

Lord *George Germain* said, that he never was personal in the House, never by any conduct of his merited such an attack ; he despised that honourable member, but would level himself with his wretched character and malice ; old as he was, he would meet that fighting gentleman, and be revenged. He was interrupted by a cry of order in the House, and general confusion. The Speaker said, if the House would support him, he would keep order. A cry of chair, chair.

Lord *North* admitted, that Lord *George Germain* had been out of order, what fell from him had nothing to do with the question. It was a personal attack on an individual, and therefore out of order.

Mr. *Luttrell* said, he would not be bullied out of the privilege of a member of that House ; he had a right to speak his sentiments publicly and fully on a public character. The

sentence of the court-martial, in the reign of George the Second, was a public record, relative to a man in a public post of trust, which required spirit, zeal, abilities, and integrity, and many essential qualities, as requisite in a war minister as in a general. He had not alluded to the noble Lord's private vices or virtues, and if he could be conceived out of order, as to the question, it could not imply that public charge of the minister was a private personality.

[Mr. Luttrell took an opportunity, in the confusion of debate, to attempt to get out of the House, to avoid being compelled to promise not to resent Lord George Germain's personal abuse of him, but the Speaker gave orders to the Serjeant at arms, to stop Mr. Luttrell, and bring him to his seat.]

The Speaker then said, that words of heat having dropped from two honourable members, in the course of the debate, he must desire they would pledge their honours that it should go no farther.

Lord George
Germain.

Lord *George Germain* said, if he had said any thing that was improper to be said in the House, he was sorry for it, and hoped the House would excuse it. He acknowledged he was out of order.

Mr. Lut-
trell.

Mr. *Luttrell* was then called upon—He said, if after being insulted for doing his duty, he was to be committed for delivering the sentence of George the Second, he should prefer being committed, to giving up the privilege of parliament, and promising to take no notice of a personal attack, not founded upon public opinion, upon any sentence, upon any trial, and hearing epithets made use of against him, which was meant as personal as they appeared, he should give no other answer, and abide by the decision of the House.

Several members rose, and a dispute ensued, whether Lord George had made sufficient apologies or not, and a motion made about eleven o'clock, by Mr. Buller,

“That the hon. Temple Luttrell be immediately taken into the custody of the Serjeant at arms.”

Disputes continued till past twelve, in which Sir James Lowther, Sir George Younge, Mr. Howard, and others, were of opinion that the privilege of parliament would suffer, if Mr. Luttrell was committed upon the present facts before the House and drew a distinction between public and private charges.

Mr. Buller, Mr. Onslow, and many members, on that side, thought Lord George Germaine could not, in honour, make

make further apologies, and were therefore for committing Mr. Luttrell.

Mr. *Luttrell* stood up again, and said that being again informed by the oldest members of parliament from every quarter of the House, that no public business whatever could go on till this altercation was settled, and being resolved to abide, at all events, by his privilege of parliament, he should beg leave to second the motion for his immediate commitment; that by his absence the House might proceed on a question of great importance to every military man, and to the whole nation; and that as parliament had but a few days more to sit before its prorogation, and still more weighty affairs of state remained for their discussion, it was necessary to discharge this dispute, he would make no apology for public severity of language, but an apology he must seek for personal insult to himself.

Upon this, Mr. Luttrell was, between twelve and one o'clock in the morning, going to be taken into the custody of the Serjeant at Arms, when Lord *George Germain* arose to make a second apology, which was fairly and particularly addressed to the honourable gentleman, for certain improper words, which the noble Lord had addressed to him, from the warmth of debate, and from feeling himself hurt by the charges stated against him.

Mr. *Temple Luttrell* then said, that now the House were satisfied that sufficient apology was made for the personality they had heard spoken against him, he should, out of respect to the House, comply with their injunctions, that it should go no further; and begged leave once more to observe, that what was said by him of the noble Lord was meant as public matter, not as private abuse or enmity.

The previous question was put on Mr. Vyner's motion, and carried without a division.*

The

* Lieut. Gen. Fraser took occasion, at the end of the debate, to inform the House, that his relation, Brigadier Gen. Fraser, corresponded with him in the most confidential manner; that he received letters from him, dated at the time of passing the Hudson's river, which were the last he ever wrote; that neither in these letters, nor in any previous ones, did he mention any disapprobation of passing the river; but, on the contrary, spoke his opinion,

The Right Hon. T. Townshend moved, "That the sum of 20,000*l.* be granted towards the payment of the debts of the late Earl of Chatham." Agreed to *nem. con.*

The Irish importation bill being read,

Sir George
Yonge.

Sir George Yonge moved, that the said bill be committed on this day two months.

Lord New-
haven.

Lord Newhaven said, he was anxious to embrace the first moment to convince the House, that his dividing the House about a week ago on this question did not proceed from a desire to give the House trouble; but to comply with the conviction of his own mind, that he ought to take the sense of the House on so very interesting a question; thinking it much better to determine the fate of the bill there, than to feed the hopes of the people of Ireland for ten days longer, and then reject it; which could only heighten, which could only aggravate, and still more embitter this disappointment, if it did not pass into a law.

That if it did not pass, he must lament that it ever came into the House, for as it had not the most favorable reception, the expectations of the people of Ireland were raised to the highest pitch, and would now be plunged into the deepest despair. That while nothing was done, they still had hope to cherish them, that sometime or other something might be done, but if this bill was rejected the curtain of despair must be drawn on their hopes for ever. That the evidence at the bar and the council who pleaded for them urged, that if this bill passed it would take something from England; though in the same breath they tell you, that something ought to be done for Ireland; but that that something must not be any thing taken from England. Arguments too absurd, futile, and ridiculous to be seriously refuted. He said he had read all the petitions upon the table against this and the other bills, in which were enumerated various articles, in which the petitioners thought they would be injured; but at the same time they sum up the whole of their apprehensions and terrors in this one sweeping objection; that from the cheapness of labour the Irish would undersell them at all foreign markets. He urged if this argument was admitted, and that Ireland was never to receive any benefit till Great Britain could work as cheap as her, it must strike every man, that Ireland can never re-

in the strongest terms, in favour of General Burgoyne and his measures,

ceive

ceive any indulgence from England ; and without advantage in trade Ireland must ever remain in its present state of indigence ; and labour be for ever cheaper than in England. All which shewed clearly that the postponing the bill could gain it no advocates ; for the argument of the petitioners against it would be the same next year as this, and so on for ever while the poverty of Ireland and the jealousy of England existed. That if this bill was rejected, it was at once telling the people of Ireland, You have soil, you have climate, you have millions of inhabitants that you could turn to lawful industry, you are blessed with harbours where your fleets of commerce may ride in safety, and your isle by the hand of Providence is better situated for the commerce of the Western world ; but all this shall avail you nothing : America shall be exempt from taxation, they shall be the arbitrary despots of their own soil ; but Ireland must continue for ever to smart under the proscribing hand of Great Britain. He divided the House and was the single member who voted against putting it off for two months.

May 27.

Mr. *David Hartley*. The motion which I shall offer to Mr. *David Hartley*, you to-day requires very little explanation, and I hope the House will think that it requires no apology. It will speak for itself, therefore I shall be very short upon the subject. If I thought that it could possibly admit of any debate, that the House before their prorogation should make a sort of recapitulation of the objects which have been adopted as the ultimate end of all our labours during this session, I might trouble you with some arguments to induce your compliance. But as the system of conciliating America by those reasonable concessions which we, on this side of the House, have been many years a pleading for, has now been adopted by the administration themselves, I could wish to fix the sense of the House and of the public to perseverance in the same disposition, and that they should publish to the whole world that the change in their conduct has not arisen from any temporary caprice, but from a sedate and considerate review of past measures respecting America, and a firm conviction of their injustice and folly, thus producing, as the fruit of that conviction, a total reversal of them. It certainly may fall out, that the concessions now offered to America, may not be received as they would have been some time ago, when we, on this side of the House, so strenuously contended that

some offers of concession and accommodation should be made to them : that it is possible that this may happen, will be allowed by those who are most sanguine in their expectations of success from the commissioners. For my own part, I am perfectly clear, that their voyage will be totally fruitless. The terms which you now offer might have served to have brought on a treaty of accommodation if they had been offered some time ago ; for instance, when the noble Lord at the head of the treasury, offered what was called, his conciliatory proposition, but a fallacious indecision has accompanied every measure that has been taken towards the recovery of the affections of America by any proceedings of justice or moderation. For these reasons principally it is, that I offer this motion to you to-day, to signify, that you are heartily and sincerely bent upon accomplishing the great object of reconciliation with America ; that you value peace above every other consideration whatsoever ; and if any rubs should happen in your present plan, to declare to all the world, that you will be ready to co-operate with his Majesty in any further conciliatory measures which may be necessary to give efficacy to your pacific intentions. I cannot imagine that any one can possibly object to an address to the King, declaratory of these dispositions. And, as to the other part of the address, viz. that this House will always be ready with the most vigorous exertions to support the national honour in the fight of all foreign powers, whenever any occasion shall offer, in consequence of any insult or attack meditated or executed by any hostile or rival state. It is not possible that there can be two opinions upon the subject. And if any pledge can be wanting to the nation, that their representatives will never desert the cause of the national honour, it will be a double assurance to them, when they see that we are putting the country into a state of preparation to defend ourselves against any insult or attack from our natural enemies, by following up with attention and efficacy every conciliatory measure towards America, which can contribute to restore that unity of affection which subsisted between us in the days when we had together but one common cause of union, glory and success. I therefore move you, Sir, “ That an humble address be presented to his Majesty to represent to his Majesty, that the great and important events which have come to the public notice since the commencement of the present session of Parliament, both with respect to the state of the American war,

and

and the conduct of the court of France towards Great Britain, are of the most alarming nature, and call for the most speedy and prudent counsels to put a stop to the progress of the war in America, as well as the most vigorous and decisive measures to repel any hostile attempts from France. To assure his Majesty that his declaration at the beginning of the present session, That he should consider the restoration of peace in America as the greatest happiness of his life, and the greatest glory of his reign—is perfectly consonant to the dispositions of his faithful Commons; and that his further declaration to them in the course of the present session, of his determination to maintain and uphold the power and reputation of this country in respect to all foreign nations—is not less satisfactory to them, as the national honour must ever be as dear to them as it can be to his Majesty himself. To represent to his Majesty, that those two points of restoring peace in America, and of maintaining the national honour in the sight of all foreign powers, are the nearest to the hearts of his faithful Commons, and that they will never relax from pursuing them with sincerity and ardour till they shall be fully and effectually accomplished. That his faithful Commons beg leave to express these sentiments in the most public manner to his Majesty, with this view, that there may remain no doubt or suspicion in the minds of any persons in America of their sincere desire for the restoration of peace, which they value and prefer above all other considerations whatsoever; and for which purpose they will be ready to co-operate with his Majesty in any further conciliatory measures which may be necessary to give efficacy to their intentions; and that it may be known at the same time to all foreign powers, that the Commons of Great Britain stand always prepared, upon all just and necessary occasions, to resent every insult, and to repel every attack upon the dignity of his Majesty's crown and upon the national honour."

Sir George Savile seconded the motion.

Lord North said, he heartily concurred in the motion.

Mr. Grenville thought that the words *any further conciliatory measures* were very loose, and might be construed to include the independency of America, which he was not for allowing. He must therefore wish that either those words may be totally left out, or other words inserted, restraining this approbation to such measures as were consonant to the act appointing commissioners.

Sir George
Savile.

Ld. North.
Mr. Gren-
ville.

Earl

Earl Nugent. Earl *Nugent* did not approve of any amendment. He was for having the motion negatived as it stood.

Lord Newhaven. Lord *Newhaven* opposed the motion; saying, he would never agree to it, as he suspected independence to America lurking in some corner of it; and called upon the noble Lord in the blue ribbon to say whether it did or not. That he had, ever since he sat in Parliament, supported government to the best of his poor abilities, with a view to recover America from its unhappy delusion, to a just and lawful obedience to the mother country. That he had never wished to enslave America, but ardently wished they should continue subjects to Great Britain as free as himself, with the fullest exercise of all the rights of the British constitution; but that he would never give a vote to render them independent, or suffer them, while the power of this country existed, to extort it by rebellion. That he would be bold to say, that it was not in the power of King, Lords, and Commons to give independence to one part of the British dominions to the prejudice of the rest. He lamented, that there was an end to all government in this country; that the laws of the land stood still, and that the constitution reeled to and fro like a drunken man, the sport and pastime of every wanton boy in the street.

That our fleet and army, including militia, consisted of of near two hundred thousand men; that our fleet was the best this country ever saw; and that fifteen millions had this session been already voted, not as he believed (as had been given out) for the purpose of reducing America, but rather, if he was to judge from our timid and dastardly proceedings, calculated to give triumph to our natural enemies the French, who had so grossly insulted us. That there was a general despondency in the people, and every mind in anxious suspense waiting the event of this awful and gloomy calm.

That he was assured, when the rebels heard we had voted fifteen thousand new levies for America, they said, if they arrived, they must submit, but that at this hour not a man of them had left Great Britain. And for these few reasons he did most heartily second the motion of the honourable gentleman [Mr. Grenville].

Lord North. Lord *North* thought the motion was in its original state worded with great care and prudence; for it did not touch upon

upon any one point in contest between Great Britain and America ; yet it gave to America a fresh and unequivocal proof of the earnest wish of Parliament to make peace with America.

Sir *George Savile* jocosely observed, that it was no wonder the counsels should reel, for our administration had been drunk these four years. Sir *George Savile*.

Sir *William Meredith* said, that whether or not the motion went so far as to offer independence, it was a certain known truth that it was not the interest of America to insist on it. Sir *William Meredith*. The religion, language, customs, manufactures, and laws of this country, would naturally invite a connection between them and us. France and her laws were odious to them. Extreme distress was the only tie that united America with France. The independence of America would only be of service to a few of the rulers. The people at large would suffer by it. It was as inconsistent with their interest to desire, as it was with our honour to grant it. The mean concessions of ministry, he feared, would not be accepted. Propositions of reconciliation with a people who had been so ill used, in order to have effect, should come from men in whom that people could have a proper confidence, not from those who had so long harassed and deceived them.

The friends of the motion perceiving, from the disposition of the House, that if the question was put, it would be carried in the negative, strongly solicited the mover to withdraw it.

Mr. *Hartley* concluded the debate by saying, that as to the objection of American independence being couched under the terms of the proposed address, his opinions were so well known upon the subject, that he need not seek to conceal them ; but, that, in the present case, no other or ulterior views were lurking under cautious words, but such as the natural prudence of persons avowedly reluctant to the independence of America, had induced them to consent to ; that he had communicated the terms of his motion to persons who were far from being favorers of independence, but who had some degree of prudence, not desperately to cut off all possible retreat ; that if every tacit suggestion of moderation is to be abjured, he only could lament the folly and imprudence of such dispositions ; that he would venture to foretell, that the day would come, when the House would regret having put a negative upon the present motion, and would perhaps think it a good bargain Mr. *Hartley*.

bargain to have it in their power to make a peace with America, simply upon the terms of independence. As to withdrawing the motion which was so much pressed upon him, he consented: having discharged his mind in having offered it, he saw no good, in the present temper of the House, in forcing them to a negative.

May 28.

Mr. Elwes. Mr. *Elwes* reported from the select committee, to whom it was referred to consider and examine the accounts of extraordinary services incurred and paid, and not provided for by parliament, which have been laid before the House in the years 1776, 1777, and 1778; that the committee had agreed upon a report, which they had directed him to make to the House. He read the title of the report, and afterwards delivered it in at the table.

Col. Barré. Colonel *Barré* animadverted upon some of the most leading facts which came out in the enquiry; explained his motives for proposing the enquiry; and pointed to some of the advantages arising from such a measure; though the great object meant to be obtained, that of detecting public delinquency, and following it with punishments proportioned to its degree and extent, should, for a while, be frustrated. He said, whatever may have come out in the examination of witnesses, those who proposed the committee originally did not find themselves much mistaken in their previous conjectures. Much has been discovered, though much more had been held back; and if malversation in office was not made manifest, neglect and incapacity were; if corruption was not proved, profusion, and a most shameful waste of public money, was sufficiently apparent.

He paid many handsome compliments on the general conduct of the gentlemen who composed the committee; nor did he mean to confine this declaration to the particular members who thought with him on the subject; but, without reserve, to extend it to those on each side of the House. There was a degree of good temper and candour, which pervaded the whole committee, and seemed to influence the conduct of each individual member of it; which he seldom was so fortunate to be witness to: and he remembered but two instances, in which that harmony and good understanding was broke in upon; one was in relation to a certain species of evidence, which the majority of the committee thought proper to deem inadmissible; the other was, the refusal to call

a wit-

a witness to a second examination, upon facts, which, from other evidence, it was clear must have come within his knowledge. He then observed, that it was now too late to take the report into consideration, just on the eve of a prorogation : in the course of the next session he would, as a part of his duty, call the attention of the House to several of the most material parts of its contents. He flattered himself, if he had not done all he had a right to hope for, he effected more than he expected by the point of sending the enquiry up stairs to a select committee, instead of having the examination take place in the House, where, from the great assistance of the representatives of the people, a fuller and more efficacious investigation might have been reasonably expected ; and where, besides, the power of compelling the attendance of witnesses, and several circumstances growing out of that authority, would, of course, be more adequate and effectual. He then moved, that the report be laid on the table, in order to be taken into consideration early in the next session.

Mr. *Jenkinson* agreed with the honourable gentleman, that *Mr. Jenkinson* no committee, considering the various objects which came *son.* before them, ever conducted business with more harmony and good temper. He begged leave, however, to differ from the honourable gentleman as to his interpretation of the nature of the evidence which was brought forth. He denied, that it imported public profusion, or waste of public treasure, any more than it disclosed any thing criminal. The only beneficial tendency which struck him, probable to arise from the enquiry, was, that it shewed, in some instances, that the offices were imposed on ; of course, it would serve to guard those in office from such impositions in time to come, and admonished them to act with more circumspection ; but if, on the other hand, the hurry of the business which pressed on those offices, the great extent of the transactions, and the peculiar necessity of dispatch, were considered ; he would be bold to maintain, that at no preceding period were the public finances ever more prudently and œconomically administered.

As to the two facts alluded to by the honourable gentleman, though he attended the committee every day but one, he did not recollect any such circumstance as either of those alluded to ; or, if they happened while he was present, did they strike him in the same light as that represented by the honourable gentleman : if the sense of the committee ap-

poared against them, he was inclined to believe that it arose from very cogent reasons.

Mr. Stanley. Mr. Stanley said, he was absent but one day from the committee, during its sitting; and protested, he saw not the least foundation for these insinuations thrown out by the honourable gentleman; as if, though the whole business was conducted with the utmost good temper, yet that that part of it which was apparent among his friends, proceeded more from a consciousness, that their struggles would prove inefficacious, than from their internal approbation.

The honourable gentleman, he said, had pointed out one or two instances, in which an acquiescence in the sense of the committee arose from this foreknowledge of the improbability of success. The first, relative to the inadmissibility of evidence; the other, as to the refusal of permitting a witness to be examined a second time, who had before been dismissed from further attendance. As to the former, no one substantial reason was urged in behalf of the admissibility of evidence proposed to be given; and as to the latter, if the honourable gentleman, or his friends, wished to have the witness re-examined, it was the easiest thing imaginable to move for a second order to bring him before the committee.

Col. Barré. Colonel Barré replied, he was pleased to hear a gentleman of his weight [Mr. Jenkinson], and long experience in business; he, who was so long connected nearly with the very board [treasury], the conduct of which was the object of enquiry; so ingenuously and fairly acknowledge, that although the committee discovered no malversation in office, no shameful waste, or public profusion, yet that this signal benefit was derived from it, that the enquiry led to the disclosure and detection of imposition; that it would put ministers, in future, with all those employed under them, on their guard; that it would make them more attentive, inquisitive, and circumspect. Was this, then, nothing gained? Was it not a great acquisition on the best principle of all human policy, that of prevention; of saving the nation, in the first instance; and extirpating the evil, in order to prevent its effects.

He heard the other honourable gentleman [Mr. Stanley], with great attention. Says he, if you wished to have the witness examined a second time, why not move for a fresh order for his attendance? This very witness [Mr. Atkinson] was dismissed; and, at the desire of the honourable gentleman, or some of his friends, was examined a second time,

time, without a fresh order having been served upon him. It is this adherence to ceremonial at one time, and flagrant departure from it at another, that gives me, as a member of the committee, a right to complain. If the rule was a wise, or a good one, it should have been adhered to; if not, it should be indiscriminately dispensed with. The fact I allude to was the rum contract; the other was not less glaring. Similar evidence had been admitted, without a single objection being made to it. But, says the honourable gentleman who spoke last, all was unanimity---I grant it; but, I contend, it was, upon many occasions, little more than the semblance. We were generally about five to twelve. We were the minority there, as well as here; when, therefore, a doubt started, an objection was made, or a difference of opinion, arose, acquiescence gave the appearance of unanimity; when I can assure the honourable gentleman, the minority of the committee were far from approving of what was done.

Sir *George Yonge* thought matters of singular consequence had come out, in the course of the enquiry; and contended, that the present report, considered both in a retrospective view, as well as smoothing the way to a further and more full disclosure, would not only fix the actors and persons concerned in those scenes with the charges of public waste and profusion; but with corruption and malversation in office. The report was then ordered to lie on the table. Sir Geo. Yonge.

Mr. *David Hartley*. I propose, with your permission, this day, to offer the following motion to the House. "That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, to intreat his Majesty, that he will be graciously pleased not to prorogue the Parliament, but that he will suffer them to continue sitting for the purpose of assisting and forwarding the measures already taken for the restoration of peace in America: and that they may be in readiness, in the present critical situation and prospect of public affairs, to provide for every important event at the earliest notice." This motion was originally a part, and intended to have been subjoined at the conclusion of the motion which I offered yesterday to the House: but as this proposition was independent of the other, I was induced to separate them, to accommodate myself to the sentiments of some honourable gentlemen who were willing to give their assent to the declaratory address, which I had the honour of proposing to you yesterday, but not to the proposition of keeping the parliament any longer sitting. The person to whom

whom I more particularly allude, is the noble Lord at the head of the treasury, to whom I beg leave to return my best thanks for his support of my motion yesterday, though it was ineffectual. There is no obligation that I could feel more sensibly, because there is nothing that I have so much at heart as cultivating and improving every possible opportunity of restoring peace between this country and America. I am very confident, that the day will soon come, when the House will regret having been so touchy upon every proposition that has but the shadow of American independence. It is want of prudence in the extreme to become more and more attached to impossibilities, in proportion as they become more evidently so. The Americans, you all know, are in fact independent. If you regret that independence, you have your ministers alone to thank for that event. By their advice and persuasion, his Majesty and this House have turned a deaf ear to all the petitions and applications from America for redress of grievances. But you would at that time offer no other terms than unconditional submission, the only alternative to which is independence. Your force is now, in all effect, defeated in America. One army entire is taken prisoners. The force which remains, is so far from being adequate to the conquest of America, that, I fear, it will find great difficulty even to defend itself. The ministers of this country first introduced foreign forces into the contest. The Americans have now in their turn called in a foreign power to their aid. We know that a French fleet of twelve or fourteen ships of the line (and, as report says, with 3000 land forces on board) has sailed these six weeks from Toulon to their assistance. Then see what a situation your remaining army will soon be in. The whole force of America augmenting and triumphant, against a brave, but diminished and deserted army, for the ministry have taken no care to send them sufficient succours. These are the events which are coming upon you without delay. Let me then ask, whether this be the time to be prorogued for summer amusements; or rather ought we not, at such a moment, to redouble our anxiety and attention, to provide *ne quid detrementi capiat res publica*.

Another argument that I would offer to you against a prorogation is, that we may be found watchful upon our post, as the guardians of this country, to be in readiness to receive at the earliest moment, the report from the commissioners, who are gone to offer a treaty to America. We may soon expect some return from that commission. Whatever be the
answer.

answer to our offers, let us at least be found upon our station to receive it, and to take the necessary measures in consequence. I think we may be but too well assured what that answer will be. Can it be believed that a nation who renounced the government of this country, and asserted their independence even as a challenge to you two years ago, when you made the great and formidable attack upon them, being then without allies; can it, I say, be conceived that the same people, having now successfully asserted that independence, and being triumphantly in possession of it, with foreign alliances for their farther support, now that your force is but little better than totally defeated, should for no reason, and from no necessity, relinquish that situation of independence, which you cannot wrest from them? It is an impossible expectation. The declaration of independence has not only passed in Congress, but every province has adopted the new government of independence; and almost every individual upon the continent has taken the oath of allegiance to their respective new governments. Besides these proofs, which I think can hardly be called presumptive proofs, because they amount to a certainty, we have, however recent and positive proofs which lately arrived from America. I mean the resolution of the Congress of the 22d of November, 1777, which runs to this effect: Resolved, "That all proposals for a treaty between the King of Great Britain, or any of his commissioners, and the united states of America, inconsistent with the independence of the said states, or with such treaties or alliances as may be formed under their authority, will be rejected by Congress." These are the considerations which induced me to offer you the motion, which I did yesterday. I am confident that you have sent your commissioners upon a needless errand, and that they will return with a refusal; for which reason, if I could have had any influence with the House, I would have recommended to them as a preparation for such an event, to have come to a declaration, that, preferring peace above every other consideration, they would have been ready to co-operate with his Majesty in any farther conciliatory measures, which might be necessary to give efficacy to their pacific intentions. Unfortunately, as I think, that motion was over-ruled, as, I fear, the motion of this day will likewise be.

If any man were to put the question to me, what should we do in the present circumstances of our affairs? if my

motion

motion of this day were to be complied with, I confess to you, Sir, I should be put to a great difficulty to give him an answer. But this is an additional reason for taking the wise and prudent advice that Parliament upon consultation might afford. The point of independance is over; don't deceive yourselves upon that subject. Can you break the alliance between France and America? Certainly not. America will be faithful to her alliances. Remember at the same time, that it is the ministry of this country which has driven them into those alliances. These points are fixed; I know they are. I have had some means of information authentic upon these subjects, that I am confident I am not deceived. If as a private person, I might give an opinion, I would endeavour to obtain your consent to the following terms, as the basis of a negotiation. I have the strongest reasons to know that this country will never get better terms of treaty. I have explained the reasons of my conviction to his Majesty's ministers, and have laid before them the following heads of negotiation, as the result of the best opinion and expectation, that in my opinion, the case presents.

That America be declared independent.

That Great Britain and America shall agree mutually not to enter into any treaty offensive to each other.

That an open and free trade shall be established between Great Britain and America.

That a mutual naturalization shall be established between Great Britain and America.

That commissioners be appointed on each part, to negotiate a foederal alliance between Great Britain and North America.

Sir George Savile.

Sir George Savile seconded the motion. No person offering to answer, the Speaker was proceeding to put the question. General Burgoyne applied to the treasury-bench, to know whether the King's servants meant to agree to the motion? In which case he said he should give the House no trouble: that otherwise he thought himself pledged to deliver his sentiments. The call was, "Go on;" and General *Burgoyne* proceeded in substance as follows:

General Burgoyne.

I shall not pursue the argument of the honourable gentleman, upon the expediency of parliament being ready sitting to deliberate upon the first intelligence that may arrive from your commissioners; that argument has already been too ably enforced to require a second: neither, Sir, after so long an indulgence as I received in a former debate, shall I again press upon the attention of the House the debt they owe to
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national justice and policy, upon the subject of enquiry: though the Generals Howe and Carleton may be expected every day; and it was upon their absence alone, that the greater part of the House seemed disposed to postpone so important and necessary a duty. But, Sir, I shall rest solely upon a view of the present state of this country, as universally compulſive upon the understanding, in favour of the measure proposed. While an enemy is prepared upon the neighbouring coast, and perhaps is at this hour embarking, diffidence, despondency, and consternation, are evident among great part of the people. A more fatal symptom prevails among a greater part; a torpid indifference to our impending fate. Men dare not, or will not, look into their desperate circumstances. God grant that general panic be not the result of all these demonstrations! for panic is incident, upon some occasions, to those who have been most distinguished for bravery upon others.

The salvation of the country depends upon the confidence of the people in some part of government. The ministry have it not; the whole nation see, or think they see, their insufficiency. I mean not to apply these words grossly or virulently; there are among them many to whose personal qualities and talents I bear respect, and to none more than the noble Lord in the blue ribband. But talents are relative to times; and it is no reproach to say, that men well qualified for negotiation, finance, or the smooth current of government, may be totally unfit for their stations, when the crisis requires instant resource, decisive counsel, animating action. That these are notoriously wanting, the best friends of the ministers shake their heads and confess. Is there a man of common sense and common spirit in the country, that does not stand confounded and aghast at the late supineness? that does not think the heralds ought to have accompanied your coach, Sir, when you carried up the address of the Commons; and that the declaration of war at St. James's gate should have accompanied the answer from the throne? "Be patient," we are told; "France may repent; Spain yet speaks us fair,"---Sir, to be patient in our situation is to be abject: our pusillanimity gives tenfold encrease to our natural weakness. Patience in private life, under affliction or disease, the strokes of fortune, or the hand of heaven, is a virtue of lovely hue; but political enduring---tamely to suffer provocation and injury,---the most wanton insult that ever was offered to a nation,---I mean the message of the French ambassador:

---Turn

———Turn thy complexion there,
 Patience, thou young and rose-lipp'd cherubin,
 And there look grim as hell.———

It will be difficult to those who are most conversant in history, and accurate in observation, to point out examples, where, after an alarm, the spirits of men have revived by inaction. This nation is put into the state of a garrison, whose out-posts are abandoned, whose sallies are stopt, and who are to combat in the body of the place for their last stake. I do not say, that men have not fought desperately in such situations; but then they have been brought to extremity by a progression of conflicts, and have seen great examples to raise and stimulate their public passions. I know of no great exertions, where the governing counsels have shewn apprehension and terror, and consequent confusion at the outset. The success of vigorous measures to restore an army after a panic, is almost invariable; ancient history abounds with examples; in our own time, they are frequent. When General Romanzoff found the Russians impressed with apprehensions of the Turkish cavalry, his first measure was to lay aside the use of chevaux de frize, and encamp without entrenchments. The revival of the general spirit of a state depends upon the same principles. We need not look abroad for examples; we have a more striking one at home than foreign annals can produce, in that immortal year, 1756, the commencement of the Earl of Chatham's administration. The most glorious tribute we can pay to his memory, is to follow his example. Let ministers visit his remains, while yet above ground, and catch wisdom, and vigour, and virtue from the view. Did he keep fleets at Spithead to prevent invasion? Did he fear to trust the internal defence of the nation to her own sons? No, Sir, your navy was employed in offensive operations in every quarter of the globe; and the nation, supported by a just confidence, were ten times stronger after the dismissal of the Hanoverians and Hessians than before. Every ship became a fleet, every regiment felt itself an host.

We have now a brave Admiral riding at Spithead, who knows the way to prevent invasion by seeking the enemy at a distance. His share of glory in the defeat of Conflans is on the minds of his followers; you cannot gratify him or them more than to give them a second occasion, and by the same means, to save their country. The brother of that admiral, a member of this House, [General Keppel] bred also in the best schools of his profession, is second in command on shore, and second to one who needs no other praise than that he was
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the favourite, [Lord Amherst] and the friend, and the confidential executor of the arduous plans of the great statesman I alluded to.---Let these men be assisted with national spirit, and England is not to be subdued, while a river or a hill remains; without such spirit, another battle of Hastings may make another conquest.

Sir, I repeat that the best hope of generating and diffusing this genuine strength of the mind, to which arms and treasure are but inadequate substitutes, depends upon the presence of Parliament, "to provide (according to the words of the motion) for every important event at the earliest notice,"---To strengthen the crown, not by adulatory addresses, but by such occasional sanctions, as would give fresh and extra-energy to its power, pending the emergency that might require it: to support public credit, in union with the city of London, not only by common engagements of faith, but by acts of quick and encouraging efficacy towards individuals, who might nobly risk their all in the cause: but above all, in full numbers and by general continuance, to exhibit themselves to the world a true representative of a determined people attacked in their vitals;---to prove that they are not to be seduced from their duty by the allurements of pleasure or personal interest, but have fortitude to await the approach of the enemy, as the Gauls were awaited by the senators in Rome; and, if need were, to receive death in these seats, to give example and fire to their surviving countrymen. Sir, a Parliament, thus inspired, (the occasion, I believe in my conscience, would give the inspiration) would spread immediate and extensive veneration and influence.---Faction in this great city, if faction there is, would be no more;---majorities and minorities here would be lost in unanimity for the public safety;---the King's name, thus supported, would be in truth a tower of strength; and the daring attempts of the enemy would only tend to the present glory and future stability of the state.

Sir, these are my sincere sentiments; and for this free delivery of them, I doubt not that I shall read in the morning papers of to-morrow that I have thrown myself into the arms of opposition. I am conscious I never did so true a service to the King and to the country as I do in the part I now take; and whatever may be the idle comments of the day, I trust that with the respectable part of the public, if the term *opposition* is to imply blame, it will be applicable only to the rejection of this motion. If the King's ministers take the lead, and exercise their persuasion for that purpose, I hold them to be the opposers of national spirit, opposers of public

virtue, opposers of the most efficacious means to save their country. Sir, I scorn to take up this language upon so pitiful a motive as personal resentment. Government, whoever are the ministers to conduct it, shall have my voice when my conscience directs it. That I think myself a persecuted man, I avow; that I am a marked victim to bear the sins that do not belong to me, I apprehend; but this is not the first time I have stood the frowns of power for parliamentary conduct; and whatever farther vengeance may be in store for me, I hope I shall endure it as becomes me. I am aware that in far better times officers have been stript of their preferments for resisting the possessors of that bench.---They cannot take from me an humble competence; they cannot deprive me of a qualification to sit here; they cannot strip me, I trust they cannot, of the confidence of my constituents to seat me here; they cannot strip me---I am sure they cannot---of principle and spirit to do my duty here.

I never was more excited by these motives, and I never can be more, than upon the present occasion to give my vote in support of the motion.

Mr. Rigby. Mr. *Rigby* ridiculed the extraordinary mode, as he called it, of reasoning adopted by the last speaker, that every man who opposes the present motion, or his particular opinions, was an enemy to public virtue. He begged leave to differ from the honourable gentleman, for he always understood that free debate and liberty of free judgement, was the very essence of that House.

The only argument, he said, used by the honourable gentleman who made the motion, for preferring an adjournment to a prorogation was, that Parliament might be sitting, and ready to assist with their counsels, when an account might be supposed to arrive from our American commissioners. If this was all the honourable gentleman meant to take by his motion, it was in fact already complied with; there was a law in being, by which the Crown was enabled to call the Parliament, in case of actual invasion or rebellion. It was acknowledged, and had not yet been contradicted, that a rebellion is existing; consequently, though terms of conciliation, or actual refusal on the part of America should be received; and that in consequence of such intelligence, the convening of Parliament should become requisite, his Majesty would have it in his power to call it together within the time stated, which, he believed, on all hands, would be confessed to be sufficiently early to provide almost against every possible exigency. The adjournment was only matter of form. The Speaker, it is true,

true, and the officers of the House, would be obliged to attend at certain stated periods ; but he was certain it would be only to meet, in order to adjourn ; for he would not be able to procure a regular attendance, or indeed any attendance.

He then proceeded to personalities against the honourable gentleman who spoke last. He said he was a prisoner and had no right as such to speak, much less to vote in that House. He expressed a wish to be tried. The honourable gentleman knew, when he desired a trial, that he could not be tried ; he was upon parole ; he was, as a prisoner under that parole, not at liberty to do any one act in his personal capacity. Suppose, for instance, the honourable gentleman should be tried and found guilty, who could punish him ? No one certainly. A prisoner is always bound to his first engagement, and amenable to the stipulations of those who have prescribed the terms. To talk therefore of trial, without the power to punish, was a farce ; the power to try, implied the power to punish ; or such a power meant nothing.

Take the matter in another point of view ; the affair of Saratoga has been already enquired into and decided upon. He denied both those assertions. Whatever steps had been already taken in the business, implied neither condemnation nor acquittal. He wished to be understood, that there was a fault somewhere ; and he would never allow, though there was a majority of nearly four to one, 144 to 44, that what the House determined on that occasion, was either an acquittal or condemnation of those who planned, or those who executed ; he was satisfied it was not. A British army was lost, the blame must rest somewhere ; the present was not a proper time to enquire, because all the parties could not be present, and because at no time was that House competent to such an enquiry. It must be sent to a military tribunal, where the honourable gentleman would be tried by his peers. When that event took place, if the honourable gentleman should be honourably acquitted, then it might become a proper subject of parliamentary enquiry. Till, therefore, the arrival of all the parties concerned, and the discharge of the honourable gentleman from his present engagement, should take place, and in consequence of that he should be acquitted, the measures which were committed to his charge could never become a matter of state, or be agitated in that House.

Right hon. *T. Townshend* condemned the mode of proceeding recommended by the last speaker, as destitute of spirit.

Right hon.
T. Townshend.

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He disapproved of all examination into private characters. He was severe on what he called the illiberality of the honourable gentleman to the unfortunate general, who was labouring for the dearest thing a soldier can possess, his reputation.

Mr. Wedderburne.

Mr. *Wedderburne* said, the motion was unnecessary, as by law, during the American rebellion, the King could call the Parliament in fourteen days, notwithstanding a prorogation; which creates a new session, in which even recent acts may be repealed. He then took occasion to propound doubts relative to General Burgoyne's capacity to vote in Parliament; and he argued them, at length, with visible preparation and much learning. He referred, very particularly, to the story of Regulus; and, to make the cases parallel, stated the General as a common prisoner of war (the convention of Saratoga being broke); that, consequently, he was not *sui juris*, but the present property of another power. He insisted, with still less expression of doubt, that the General, under his present obligations, was incapacitated from exercising any office, or bearing arms in this country.

Gen. Burgoyne.

General *Burgoyne*, in reply, stated the mistake upon which Mr. Wedderburn's argument was in a great measure founded, viz. that the convention was broken, and that the General was under the usual restrictions of a prisoner of war. The convention was declared by the Congress not intended to be broken, on their part, though the execution of it was suspended. The General therefore insisted, that he was under no other obligation, than that specified in the convention, "Not to serve in America;" and that of his parole, "To return at the demand of the Congress, and due notice given:" that in this country he was free to exercise his rights as a citizen and a soldier; that should the enemy land, though the present disfavour might preclude him from the command which his rank, and some experience, might entitle him to, he trusted the King would not refuse his request, to take a musquet in defence of his country. He proceeded to argue, that even upon the supposition that Mr. Wedderburn's position had been true in its full extent, and that he had been, directly, a prisoner of war under parole, he should not have been incapacitated from acting in Parliament; and in answer to the precedents brought from remote ages, he produced one of a present member [Lord Frederick Cavendish] who, when a prisoner in France, after the action of St. Cas, and upon his parole in England, sat and voted in Parliament. That noble

noble Lord, upon quitting France, had asked, whether any restraint in that respect was meant? As he should certainly vote for every measure that could distress the enemy.—He was told, that they should as soon think of restraining him from getting a child, lest, when it came to maturity, it should do them mischief.

The General proceeded to observe, that the cases, in point of explanation, were precisely the same; for that before he left the army, it had been intimated to him, that there were persons in Boston, who doubted whether he should not be restrained by parole from taking any part in Parliament, at least, when America was concerned; that he came to an explanation with those entrusted with the sentiments and powers of the Congress; and declared, that if such restraint was intended, he would remain and die in that country, rather than return home.—The idea was abolished; nay, more, it was expressed, that the friends of the Congress conceived rather advantage than injury from the General's presence in Parliament; that they wished for peace upon proper terms; that they were persuaded, the General, as a man of humanity, wished the same; that they believed he had honour to speak truth, and that truth would conduce to that desirable end.

Sir *H. Houghton* thought the business should be suspended until the difficulty respecting the General should be settled. *Sir Henry Houghton.*

The *Speaker* said, it was not a matter of doubt. The learned gentleman had argued upon a supposition, that the honourable gentleman had not received so extensive a permission as he standing in his place had affirmed he possessed. As this assertion could not be disputed, there could not be a doubt of the honourable gentleman's right to his seat. *The Speaker.*

After this explanation, Mr. Wedderburne acknowledged no doubts remained upon the General's rights; and the House were unanimous in the same opinion.

Mr. *Fox* said, that though he hoped the prejudice inspired by the dream of the learned member, for it turned out to be no more, on the minds of the House, yet he thought it necessary to say this much more: that the leave granted to the honourable gentleman, to do his duty in Parliament, was not contained in the permission for his return and absence, but stood within the knowledge of the House, merely on the testimony of his own information. Having said this, and believing that no farther argument was necessary on so ridiculous a subject, he begged leave to say a few words to the question.

He

He confessed he saw the greatest reason in the world for adopting the measure of the address, and not one reason had been urged against it. Remembering how fatal the last long recess had been, he could not conceive how any man, in the least interested in the welfare of his country, could think of trusting again to the management of the ministry. On the very instant, when the House were about to think of a conciliatory plan, it was adjourned for more than six weeks [the Christmas recess] and in that fatal time, what was the conduct of the ministry? Though they knew that they were about to yield up every thing they had before denied, and by the intimation of which, in due time, they might have prevented the effects that have ensued, yet they never made the least intimation, but gave time for France to conclude a treaty, by which every hope of bringing America back to dependency is forfeited for ever. They filled up that space in levying armies, without the knowledge or controul of Parliament, and for that reason we must trust them again, as fully and implicitly as we should the majority of Parliament. Ready on all occasions as that majority was to obey the will of the minister—inattentive and negligent as some, and dependent as the most of them were, yet still he preferred their votes and measures to those of the administration. An honourable gentleman had said, that they were carrying on war at this very time, to the best of their understandings, against France and Spain. Looking back upon their conduct, he found equal reason for being displeased with their understandings here too. What stroke had they struck? or what active enterprize had they executed? They had moved an address to the throne, and they had recalled their ambassador; this was the extent of what their understandings had produced. In more than two months they had been able to execute these mighty objects, and their understandings deserved credit for the happiness of the contrivance, as well as the accomplishment of these two things. It was said, by a learned gentleman, that his Majesty had it in his power to convene Parliament in fourteen days; so he has after adjournment; and it is better to trust to adjournment, in this case, which will certainly convene us, than to prorogation, which may not do so. Aye, but, says the learned gentleman, by a prorogation we shall have a new session, and then we may repeal the acts of the present; “then, says he, it may be fairly concluded, that we are to repeal the acts of the present session.” That learned gentleman is the key to the cabinet; he

he knows the secrets of state, and he says we must, in the next session, probably repeal every thing we have done in this; he knows that the propositions of peace will not be accepted; he is not sanguine enough, to flatter himself that they will; he knows that the plan is inadequate; the concessions, however humiliating, not sufficient; we have brought ourselves so low, that kneeling before them, with concession in our hands, cannot procure us the peace we pant for, and we must repeal before we succeed. I agree with the learned gentleman, that the plan we have proposed is inadequate; but if in the present session we cannot repeal, we may vary; and as we do not mean to restrain the Americans in any degree, the variation that may be necessary will be in our power. The situation of his honourable friend was an incentive towards continuing the session of the most powerful nature. He was unfortunate—singularly unfortunate; and it was the business of the House, to enquire into the causes of his misfortune, and charge them on the true author, whoever he might be. It was to his honourable friend a matter of consolation, though he knew him too well to suspect that he preferred private consolation to the good of his country; yet, he said, it might console him to think, that he was not the only unfortunate man who had served the present administration. It was the fortune of every man who had served them to be unfortunate. Every officer in America was an instance of the fact. General Gage had not reaped any laurels in their service, nor had Admiral Graves any reason to rejoice at his success. Sir William Howe had not escaped the misfortunes that overtook their servants; though crowned with repeated conquests, he had lost by his success. Lord Howe's character could not be much hurt by their insinuations, rancorous as they have been; but he has gained no additional honour from his exploits in their service. The manner in which the other gallant officer, Sir Guy Carleton, had been treated, needed no comment; it was upon record, and would stand an example in future, for the instruction of men who might be hazardous enough to attempt to serve their country beneath the auspices of men who are obliged to cover their ignorance and inability, and screen themselves from ignominy and contempt, by throwing blame upon the men who were unwise enough to act as they were instructed. The concealment of intelligence delivered to them, under any form, was criminal to the highest degree, when the character of a soldier depends upon the discovery. He knew not
how

how to speak of their conduct and preserve his temper. He wondered how the people could hear of it and withhold their resentment. He could not avoid adverting to a circumstance, which he confessed was new to him. It was a subject of praise to a noble Lord, whose ingenuity he seldom had cause to applaud; just, however, to merit in every instance, he could not be blind to it in this; where invention was so rare, it was politic to cherish the first appearance of it. A timely attention might promote its growth, as good husbandry, and careful cultivation, made even a barren soil fruitful. The noble Lord in the blue ribbon had most ingeniously created a new species of oratory, and that of so divine and specific a nature, that it would serve every occasion, and refute every argument:—"When we attempt, says the honourable gentleman, to charge to that noble Lord's negligence, or inability, the loss of America, and thereby the destruction of national grandeur, national interest, and national credit, he replies, in his new-invented language, Well, you may say this, and say that; but I do say again and again, I did not lose America." This reply is irrefutable; what can be urged against it? We must alter our accusation, and, instead of throwing it on the noble Lord, condemn General Washington, as the only cause of our having lost America. His superior abilities had frustrated every effort; we did all that men could do, but he, like the arm of Heaven, overthrew our strength, and made us yield to his superiority. Arguing in like manner, we ought to say, it was not owing to the head or the heart of King James, that he lost the crown of Britain, but the wickedness of the times. He did all that man could do, but his enemies were the more powerful, and he was forced to submit. In the same manner, if the fleet that sailed six weeks ago from the port of Toulon, had attacked and taken the most valuable territory of the empire, destroyed the fleet, and made captive the army in America, we must not condemn the ministry as the cause of our misfortunes, they could not avoid it; they did all that men could do, but the winds of Heaven were against them, and the winds of Heaven were alone the destroyers we ought to condemn. It has been repeatedly urged by the noble Lord, that it is not possible for administration to defend all our extended empire from the encroachments of the enemy. True: but is there any one part of the empire at this moment defended, except Portsmouth? Have the ministry put their own defensive plan

ing execution. Ridiculous and inadequate in our situation as a defensive plan is, have they even begun upon that? Nature has assisted them most materially in this task. The Gut of Gibraltar is a kind of general protection for our Mediterranean dominions; a fleet stationed there, prevents those of your enemies from sailing—and yet, so blind and indifferent have they been, that no fleet is stationed there for that purpose. We cannot, as the noble Lord says, number ships with France and Spain. This superiority is multiplied by our acquiescence. It is not the greater number of ships that a state actually possesses, but the number employed in action that constitutes superiority. If France has twelve line of battle ships at sea, while we have forty-two in port, she is superior. Instead of defending, let us attack. One great stroke of policy must now be attempted, as one great, sudden, unexpected stroke can alone, in our present situation, save us. Such a one as that which determined the fate of the last war, and such a one as might now be effected. Need he say that the Spanish *flota* would be an issue to the conflict. To effect such an object, the hands of government must be strengthened, great, prodigious supplies must be granted, the nerves of war must be strained to their extent, and, for that purpose, we must continue to sit. Money will be wanted in the course of the summer, and it will be necessary for the House of Commons to find it somewhere. Bad and deplorable as our situation is, it is not desperate. Britain cannot despair, if her ministers are as able to plan as she is to execute.

Lord *North* answered particularly to almost every argument of the opposite party. General Burgoyne had not reason to say he was a persecuted man. That assertion he could not sit and hear, without, at the same time, feeling the injustice of it. It had been the care of administration to cherish his merit; they saw it in its growth, and reward kept pace with its progress. If to be raised above his elder officers in the service, was persecution, he did not wonder, considering how much he had been persecuted, that he wished for more. He did not at all interfere with his political opinions. He might throw himself into the arms of opposition, without thereby recommending himself a bit the more. He did not look for merit to any particular part of the House: General Burgoyne had a superior claim to most others, wherever he sat. He begged the honourable gentleman who spoke before him, not to level his satire at the majorities of the Houses of Parliament—They were respectable, unbiassed, and confident in their conduct; he paid the utmost deference to them, but, in

Ld. *North*.

the present case, he truly thought that Parliament might trust as safely to the ministry. It was their interest to convene them, in case of advice from the commissioners---in case of invasion---in case of emergencies that might require further supplies. It was their interest, and Parliament might trust them at least so far with as much confidence as they would majorities. The honourable gentleman had said, we were not yet in a desperate situation---the assertion did him honour. It was a proof of his superior understanding---it was true. The honourable gentleman had echoed an assertion he had often used—"That he had not been the cause of losing America." He confessed he had frequently said so, and he was ready to submit his conduct to parliamentary enquiry. It might be, as the honourable gentleman had said, a new language, and it might be used for the purpose of preventing harsh censures. Was it so much owing to his inability, negligence, or design, as to the inflammatory conduct of some men, that we had lost America? He had never touched on that point, and he wished to be silent on it. He had, on a former day, given his opinion on the propriety of intercepting the Spanish flota. It would not be honourable, and therefore it would not be politic. He agreed with the honourable gentleman that great supplies must be granted and the utmost efforts made, even this summer. He hoped they would be made, and he expected they would be successful.

Mr. Burke. Mr. *Burke* could not, he said, have the most distant comparison made between the majorities of Parliament, and the minority, without feeling resentment at the pretended equality. Blind, biassed, and manacled, as the majorities have of late been, still the dignity of the House, and the recollection of what majorities were formerly, induced him to reprehend so unequal a comparison. Majorities have been composed, even in this session, of the independent part of the House. The opinion of the minority, by continuing the same for years together, brought them, by the transition of the contrary opinion, into the largest majority that ever the present administration were blest with. Minorities have become majorities, by the absurdity, in the first instance, and inflexibility, in the second, of the ministry. He could not avoid reverting to the dream of the learned gentleman, nor enough wonder, reflecting on his amazing sagacity, that he should have been reduced to the incapacity of quoting examples from the records of barbarity. The conduct of war, in the days of Rome, is, indeed, a very proper line for ours. It would have been the misfortune of that learned gen-

gentleman, if he had been made a prisoner in those days, to have been set up to public sale, with his doubts, and his ribbons about his neck, and been sold for a slave. He was happy that his dream was so soon, and so easily read, and that, like all dreams, it had been born in the weakness of the brain, and had ended in nothing. He begged leave to say, to an expression, that had fallen from an honourable gentleman, and answered to by the noble Lord, something in favour of opposition. It was not, his wish that any gentleman should join with opposition, before he had well considered the principles he entertained, and the conduct of the party he was about to join. To young members he invariably said, that he would rather wish them to join administration, than to adhere to opposition, before their minds are made up. It was so much more shameful to change from opposition to administration, than from the latter to the former, that he begged them to be cautious and considerate in their choice. If the honourable gentleman did mean to join with the part of the House to which he adhered, he would only say, that he would join with a set of men, as wise, as disinterested, and as worthy as ever existed, engaged in the greatest, and the best of causes. He begged to say to the noble Lord, who denied himself to be the cause of American defalcation, that if he would not confess that he had, through wilful blindness, lost that continent, he must be forced to acknowledge that he had been the dupe of interested individuals. He had been misinformed, misadvised, and had misconducted the whole affair. He had not intended, perhaps, to lose, but he had lost America.

Mr. *Turner* informed the House, that there were vessels in the Bay of Dunkirk, ready to sail, at an hour's warning, fit to carry 30,000 men. Marshal Broglie was on the coast—30,000 men were in readiness, and an invasion was undoubtedly the design. Was it not therefore a consideration of the most material weight, for the House to provide against that danger, by sitting, and deliberating, from day to day.

The question was called for and put; the House divided for the motion 53, against it 105. Adjourned to June 2.

June 2.

Sir *James Lowther* got up, and begged leave to wave the motion which he had pledged himself to the House to make respecting a dower for the Duchess of Cumberland;---declining it for the present, because of his Majesty's having taken into consideration the case of the Duchess of Gloucester; he therefore concluded he would now make a similar provision for the other branch of the Royal Family.---After this, Sir

M m 2

James

James reviewed the Irish and Roman Catholic bills, and hoped the two nobles who patronized the former, and the honourable gentleman who brought in the latter, would declare what length they meant to go in their future bills which they intended to bring in the next session on the same grounds, that they might not be hurried through in a similar manner to the last, but that Parliament might know what they were doing. He likewise said something about the Dissenter's objections to the Catholic bills.

Earl Nugent.

Earl *Nugent* openly declared it was his intention, early in the next session, to move for the Irish import bill; and for this plain reason, because the export bill, without it, would avail them nothing. Ireland could not afford to give long credit, which however she must be necessitated to do, unless in her commerce with our plantations she was permitted to barter for, and import their commodities. Contending at the same time, that their present national necessities demanded this indulgence of the English Parliament.

Sir George Yonge.

Sir *George Yonge* said, he should oppose the bill, because the present necessities of Ireland were created by her voting sums of money to government which they were unable to pay.

Lord Newhaven.

Lord *Newhaven* said, he should move early in the next session for the import bill to be brought in, not even excepting sugars, though he found the noble Lord was inclined to give it up.

Mr. Gilbert.

Mr. *Gilbert* said, he should propose an enquiry into the trade of both countries, before he voted for any more commercial bills at all.

Sir George Savile.

Sir *George Savile* now rose to explain himself respecting the Roman Catholic bill, and assured the House, the dissenters were very anxious for the Catholics to enjoy the fullest privileges with the rest of his Majesty's subjects.

Sir James Lowther.

Sir *James Lowther* now moved for an address to his Majesty, imploring him most "graciously to continue his Parliament sitting by adjournments, 'till a happy termination might be put to the present public exigencies." He supported this motion principally on the impossibility of selecting the members from the remote parts of the kingdom in time, should his Majesty find it necessary to call them together, in consequence of the right vested in him to convene his Parliament within fourteen days.

Sir Philip Jennings

Sir *Philip Jennings Clerke* seconded the motion on the general ground of necessity; said the nation was in imminent danger,

danger, for that he had been informed, since he came into the House, that the Brest fleet had been seen within a few leagues of Plymouth; he said he was more particularly for the motion from the old adage, that "in the multitude of counsellors there was safety."

Earl *Nugent* said, he fancied, that if even the motion was carried, the last speaker would be disappointed in his hopes, as he believed very few counsellors would remain in town. [Here a slight altercation took place between his Lordship and the Speaker about order.] *Earl Nugent.*

Mr. *T. Luttrell* approved of the motion upon the same grounds with the former speakers; adding, there was a vast deal of business that he knew required the attention of Parliament at this crisis. Said he had a motion to make relative to the manning of the navy, of which he had long given previous notice to the House. He roundly asserted, that though the seamen voted by Parliament were 60,000, yet the utmost the admiralty had ever mustered was in September last, when the number was 51,000. *Mr. T. Luttrell.*

Mr. *Penton*, one of the Lords of the admiralty, got up, and said, it was a very easy matter to make such assertions as he had just heard, but not quite so easy to prove them; which he would demonstrate from the official paper then in his hand; for, notwithstanding the honourable gentleman had advanced, that there were never more than 51,000 seamen, he would as roundly assert, and prove also, that there were borne on the books the 31st of December last, as proved at the navy board, and which could admit of no imposition whatever, that 59,869 seamen, including marines, which are included in the vote of Parliament above alluded to, were borne, and at the same time there were actually mustered 56,704. *Mr. Penton.*

Mr. *T. Luttrell* said he supposed these accounts were made up in the like manner as those which were laid before the House, respecting the ships, &c. on the Jamaica station; among which the *Niger*, and two others that were stated, he saw himself a few days after in Cowes roads. *Mr. T. Luttrell.*

Mr. *Penton* said, that was very probable, for if those vessels were either going to Jamaica with convoys, or returning from thence on the same business, they were necessarily classed under the ships on the Jamaica station. *Mr. Penton.*

Honourable Mr. *Fitzpatrick* said, he fancied he could furnish the House with an additional reason or two for the necessity of their continuing to sit. He was just arrived from America; and since he found the noble Lord who presided in that de- *Mr. Fitzpatrick.*

department did not think proper to lay any of the intelligence before them he had received from Sir William Howe by the same ship he came over in, he would endeavour to give them all the information in his power. He sailed the 25th of April; the draft of the conciliatory bill had been received ten days before that; but, instead of being published in the proper way, in order to produce the desired effect, it was only posted up, and dispersed among the lower class; no notice whatever of it having been sent either to the Congress or to General Washington. The bill was ill received by our own army; they thought themselves reduced thereby to a very humiliating situation: they were promised a reinforcement of 20,000 men, instead of which they were to receive a French fleet. He said he had had a conference with two or three people high in the confidence of Congress, who treated the conciliatory bill with contempt; said, if it had come from Lord Chatham it would have been received, but not from the present ministry. He censured the conduct of government for their treatment of General Burgoyne; and supposed that Sir William Howe, who was now on his passage to England, would meet with a similar reception. He had learnt since his arrival in England, to be astonished at nothing; for since two men of such opposite principles had gone out with the American commission, he should not be surprised at any thing that might happen; but he thought they should at least have gone out in two ships, without they had come to a previous agreement before they sailed, not to mention the word America for fear of quarrelling. He concluded his speech by saying the people of Falmouth, where he landed, discovered such an anxiety to know how matters went on in America, that he thought from thence this country itself was not very remote from a civil tumult.

Ld. George
Germain.

Lord *George Germain* replied; said what the honourable gentleman had spoken as coming within his own knowledge, he had no right to doubt; but he must beg leave to undeceive him and the House with respect to matters which he advanced from the information of other persons; because if such facts existed, he must have been apprized of them likewise, which was not the case. As to the reinforcement of 20,000 men, he had never made, nor heard of any such promise. The general officer had not, as he knew of, been ill treated by any part of administration, nor did he complain of any thing, except not being admitted into the royal presence, which was justified by precedent. Every thing had been done that the

nature

nature of his situation would admit of; a board of general officers had been called to enquire into his conduct, who refused to take cognizance of it. This, however, did not prevent the general's stating his whole conduct to Parliament, which he has been permitted to do in the amplest manner. With respect to Sir William Howe's dispatches, which were received but yesterday, he had hardly time to read them over himself, before he sent them to his Majesty, and therefore he could not have stated them to the House if he had thought it necessary. In regard to America not receiving the conciliatory bill, because it came from the present ministers, if that was the only impediment to peace, it might soon be removed, for he would willingly resign his employment, whenever it appeared that his holding it prevented the conciliation so much to be wished.

The House divided; for the prorogation 94, against it 54.

June 3.

Mr. *Temple Luttrell* recommended it to the admiralty board to substitute, in the place of impressing, the plan of hiring seamen for three years, with a bounty on their voluntary entrance. He enforced this advice with many powerful arguments, and proved, as far as reason and experience can convince, that it was the only mode in the present situation, that can be effectual. Many thousand able and experienced seamen, were at this time, totally lost to the country by being concealed among their friends. The dread of impressing, not the fear of engaging in the service for the war, was the only reason that induced them to fly. Remove the suspicion they entertain of being kept for life, and they would repair with chearfulness to the ship side, and accept the bounty. Mr. Temple
Luttrell.

The Commons were this day sent for to the House of Lords, when the King put an end to the session, by a speech from the throne, which see at the end of the Lord's debates.

The

The following Speech was delivered on the 25th of May, in the House of Commons, by the Hon. James Luttrell.

THOUGH I despair from any thing I can say to awaken Ministers to a sense of their duty, when so many gentlemen of much greater abilities and importance than myself have failed in the attempt; yet, when I reflect a moment on the present times—times, Sir, of general outcry of an invasion, of the failure of public credit, the excess of taxes, the decline of commerce, the bankruptcy of merchants, the murmurs and discontent of our fellow subjects, and when we have been told, that our fleets and armies are scarcely sufficient to protect this island, and its foreign dependencies, much less adequate to revenge the grossest insults and indignities ever dared to be offered to the Crown of England by the House of Bourbon,---indignities announced by a message from his Majesty,---insults warmly acknowledged by the Ministers in full Parliament---at so humiliating a period of our history, with the sword of Great-Britain sheathed in disgrace; I cannot find myself seated in the presence of men, who have brought so much dishonour, and calamity on my country, without persevering to reprobate their past conduct---without the utmost jealousy and mistrust of their future conduct.

The papers now upon the table are proofs presented to us by Government, that they had full and timely intelligence of the armament at Toulon; they knew its progress regularly from the 3d of January, till it sailed on the 13th of April, with a fair wind; and though that fleet was but seven or eight days moderate sail from the Streights of Gibraltar, it was suffered to be at sea eighteen days, and none of our ships ordered out, or found to be in readiness to proceed against that fleet, either by strengthening our force in the Mediterranean, or upon any other plan whatsoever: for it was not till the 1st of May, when the wind changed to the westward, that Admiral Byron received his orders. The nation will judge whether Ministers have acted like wise men, who made proper use of intelligence, or like persons taken by surprize, and totally ignorant of the operations of France. Their conduct is somewhat similar to that extraordinary General, Prince Charles of Lorraine, (now Governor of the Low Countries) who having received certain intelligence, that the King of Prussia intended to surprize his camp, surprized the King of Prussia, by getting drunk, and making no preparations for a defence;

defence; by which means his army of 80,000 men was cut to pieces, and defeated by the King's army of only 25,000.

I beg leave to remind the House, that the Conciliatory Bills are founded on a principle, that we are able to contend with France, Spain, and America. How does it agree with that principle to find difficulty in opposing one single French Squadron?

The ministerial argument, that because all is in danger, we must only look at home, may be consistent with their favourite selfish policy in the extreme; but I trust, the nation has more enlarged ideas, and therefore I think the failing of the Toulon fleet cannot be too often repeated; the neglect of ministers, which made that fleet of consequence, cannot be too much censured. As a member of this House, I must think it my duty to investigate the charge; but, Sir, I am called upon by additional considerations, for I was bred in a profession in which I was early taught to look up with emulation and respect, to those great naval characters, who have so often distinguished themselves, at the hazard of their lives, in their country's service, and done all that men could do to merit the esteem of the people; to merit a fair and honourable protection from the Crown and Parliament. Need I say, Sir, that Lord Howe is one of those characters; or that to see him sacrificed and betrayed must give every honest man pain? I cannot therefore pay a compliment to that sort of candour in ministers which consists in pretending to be so careful of this island, that so gallant an admiral was not thought of till too late to send him any assistance, or even intelligence.

I have heard ministers plead, that they knew not the destination of the Toulon armament: I should imagine their intelligence that eighty masters of merchant vessels were sent to Toulon as pilots---their intelligence that passengers of distinction, answering to the description of emissaries from the court of France, were to embark; added to the hastiness of the equipment, and the strength of the fleet, would have alarmed ministers to prepare for its destination being to America. Were ministers ignorant that our army in America depends for subsistence or retreat upon our superiority by sea? Were they ignorant that a scattered fleet is not a match for one that is united? Were they ignorant that a single ship can outsail a fleet? And ought not a man of war to have carried intelligence to Lord Howe of a superior fleet to his own standing to the westward? If ministers could not spare a squadron, was the object hazarded not worth sparing one single ship.

Ministers knew the Toulon armament was destined to commit hostilities against us. Were they ignorant that we are unprepared to contend with it in any part of the globe? Ought not a fleet then to have been ready to oppose it? Ought not the same Admiral, and the same ships, to have been ready to sail from Spithead in time, when wind was fair, instead of delaying till it was too late, and the wind contrary? Could no privy council be found between January and May, to determine how to act, should the Toulon fleet put to sea? Were they all that time wrangling who should have the reversion of the Cinque Ports? or are they totally indifferent how many gallant officers, ships, or troops, are sacrificed through their wavering policy of extreme rashness, or extreme indolence and somnolency?

What is the situation of Lord Howe? Was he sent to America to watch the motions of the French, or to protect the army, and to scatter his fleet along the coast, to prevent the Americans from interrupting our commerce? Lord Howe is known to be as vigilant as he is brave; but it may be difficult to enter into his great mind, that an insulted flag is parading at Spithead; or that ministers, who promised to be his trusty centinels upon Europe, have slept on the watch, or been regaling at a mere puppet-show; whilst that gallant admiral, without time to collect his scattered ships, is suffered to be attacked by a fleet superior to his own---a fleet from France---a fleet escaped from under the eye of government, and gone forth in defiance of that boasted navy of Great-Britain, which the Earl of Sandwich so often pledged his faith to be superior to the united fleets of France and Spain. That boasted navy, which, by the grants upon our journals appears to have cost this nation, in the eight years of that Earl's administration, twice as much as the eight years of the last war.

Had a single ship been sent in time to Lord Howe, with orders to prepare, perhaps the great naval skill of that Admiral, joined to the abilities of the gallant officers who serve under him, might have united a force, and so managed it, as to have protected that part of the coast where General Howe's army is employed. But then we must judge of Lord Howe's fleet by his returns in November, and attribute to the confidence which ministry place in our running no hazard of defeat in America; that allowing for the Bristol gone to Jamaica, and a sixty-four gun ship returned home, that there remains, the Eagle 64, St. Albans 64, Reasonable 64, Non-such 64, Somerset 64, Centurion 50, Preston 50, Isis 50, Expe-

Experiment 50, Renown 50, Phoenix 40, Rainbow 40, Roebuck 40; the Ardent 64, and Trident 64, on their passage out. In all seven sail of the line, five fifty-gun ships, three forty-gun ships, and about twenty-six frigates, with the advantage of smaller rates to supply the fleet with men. But Parliament must see that under the most flattering circumstances, that fleet could not protect the Delaware, New York, Nova Scotia, and Canada.

But what shall be said severe enough of Ministers, if they have hazarded so formidable an attack from the French, not only without the advantage of Lord Howe to command our fleet, but perhaps deprived of half the ships I have before stated; for, if report says true, Lord Howe, in the Eagle, with two sixty-four gun ships, and some frigates, are now in their passage home. Others only say, that a part of our ships are ordered to return, but not Lord Howe. Sir, if either of those reports are founded on truth, what sort of a fleet will then remain in America to protect the British army? Or should any squadron of ours be met on their passage home by the Toulon fleet, would they not be sacrificed through the fatal neglect of ministry? For though I will admit that it might not have been Count D'Estaing's original plan to have steered to intercept them, yet when we consider the strong south-west winds which blowed in the beginning of May, which would have driven the French fleet (if in the western ocean) up into our northern latitudes, it is no longer improbable that our men of war should be met on their passage home, and be taken by so superior a force.

A Mediterranean fleet of observation was the more necessary, because a fair wind depends not only upon the place bound to, but the place bound from; whereas a squadron sent from our channel, having the same wind with the French fleet, might not find equal advantages to shape a course for America, and thereby arrive too late to be of any utility.

How far the resources of this country, its sea and land forces, are equal to contend with France, Spain, and America, ministers, who have made the task inevitable, must answer to the nation. But I do say, if Parliament is so panic-struck about invasions—is grown so very humble, and insignificant, as to give up all hopes of revenging the insults of the House of Bourbon, and basely mean to yield up the dominion of the seas to our natural enemies, without striking one blow, for the ancient honour and reputation of the British flag: Parliament ought, at least, in common justice to the characters of gallant officers, who have lived to serve their

country in better days, and under better ministers, to have secured to them a safe and honourable retreat, which the army and navy in America may, through the fatal treachery and neglect of ministers, be totally cut off from, for want of timely intelligence, and a proper addition of ships; and, should the hand of Providence have interposed so much in our favour, as to have rendered eighteen days ineffectual to the designs of France, and so ordered the winds, that, whilst they blew strong at east, both in the Channel and Mediterranean, when the French fleet sailed, and, though the wind did not change to the westward with us till the 1st of May, that it should have changed in the Mediterranean soon after Comte D'Estaing. I believe so providential an event would not be attributed to the prayers of the Earl of Sandwich, or be sufficient to convince the nation of the vigilance, foresight, and wise precaution of government.

I shall take this opportunity to say a few words relative to the armament at Cadiz. I have heard it said, that it is only meant to protect their galleons. But can we be a moment deceived in the intentions of the Spaniards, when we see them send out a force equal to the utmost exigency of being absolutely at war with Great-Britain. Is it not a proof, that they do not expect to be at peace with us, even till the month of June, when, at the latest, their galleons should arrive? Is it not a proof, that they, too, have signed the treaty? Whatever be the real destination of that armament, let me remind the ministry, that the Review is over, and Gibraltar defenceless.

As to an invasion, I have too great an opinion of the spirit of Englishmen, to dread its consequences. I hope, likewise, that we have at last got a fleet to guard our coast. We know we have an admiral to command it [Keppel] justly confided in by this country, and whom the French and Spaniards dread, by their dear-bought experience.

I cannot sit down, Sir, without touching on the difficulty which gentlemen on that side the House have expressed, to reconcile to their understandings the warlike order of the minority members, who so long reprobated the civil contests. I think I can, in very few words, prove my conduct to be consistent, if not to their satisfaction, at least to their conviction.

I never mean to retract my opinions on that subject. I acknowledge I wished the Americans success, as long as you waged an unjust, rash, and savage war against them, without holding out redress of grievances, and constitutional terms of peace.

A. 1778.

D E B A T E S.

peace. And, Sir, the same sentiments which warmed me in their cause, must animate me to call strenuously upon ministry for vigorous measures against France and Spain. It is because I glory in opposing Arbitrary Power, and never wish to see despotic principles established in the constitution of Great-Britain, whether by the arms of our enemies, or through the treachery of our ministers.

I shall give my hearty vote for the Right Hon. Member's motions. They are founded on strong incontrovertible facts, furnished by government themselves.

In the debate on the contractors bill, Governor Pownall's speech, page 167, is misstated. He voted for the bill's going to a committee; because, as he observed, the sense of the House had already been twice taken upon it, and a respectable majority having both times appeared in favour of it, he thought there was an indecency upon a small majority to refuse sending the bill to a committee,

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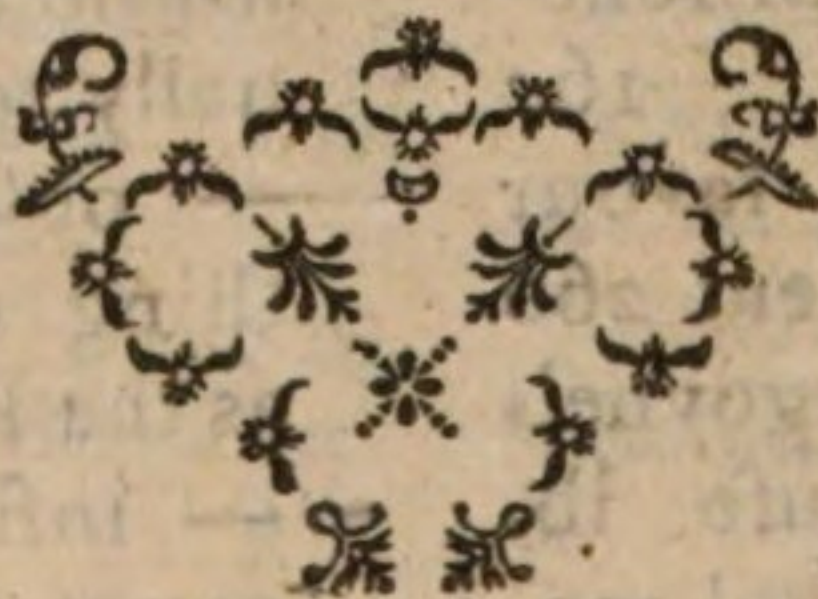
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